



VERSES

BY

E. F. GREEN



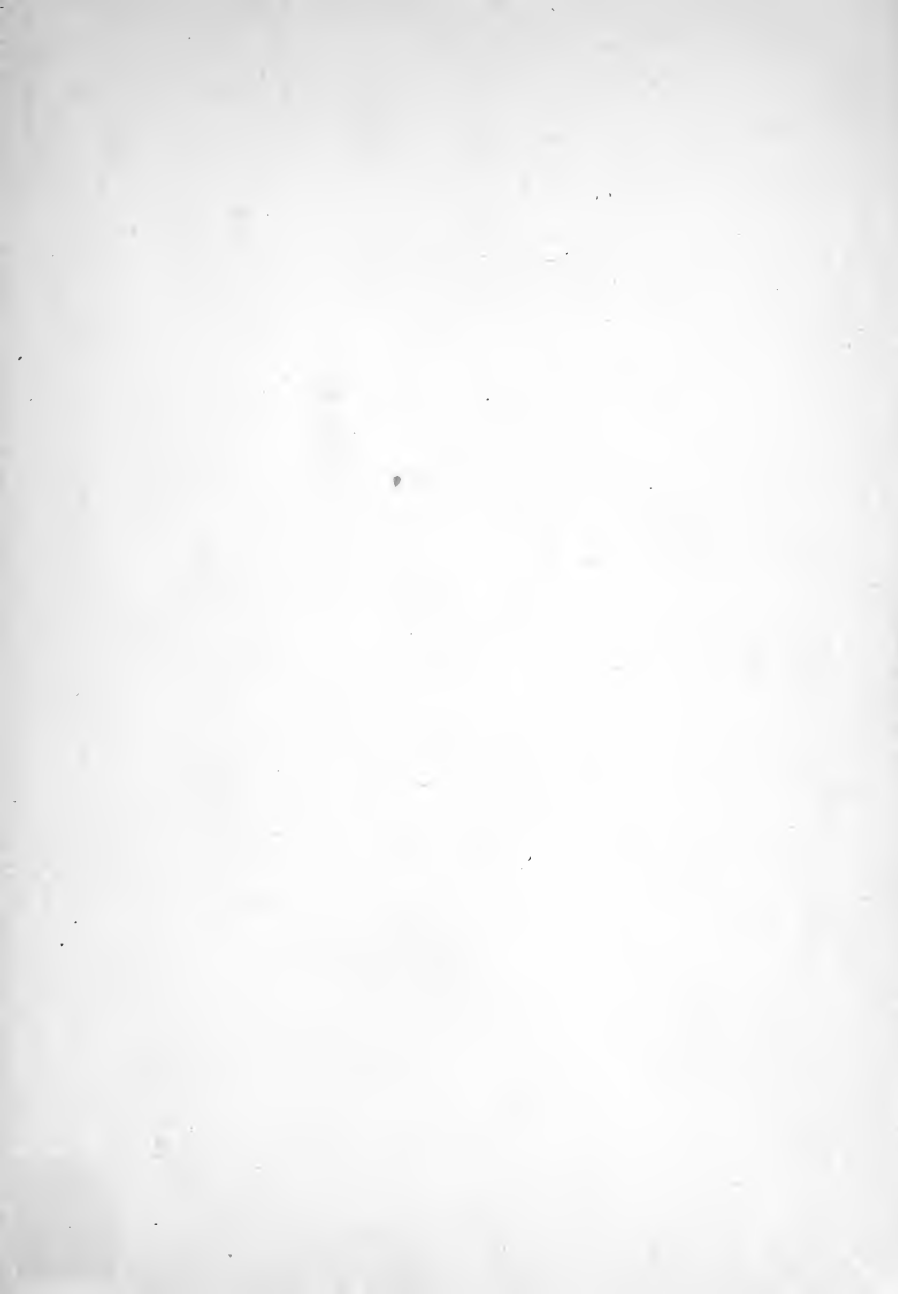
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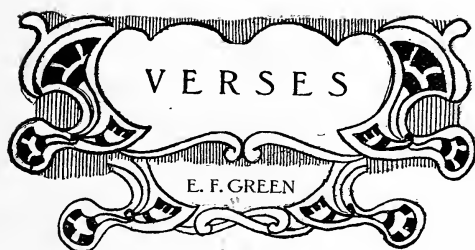
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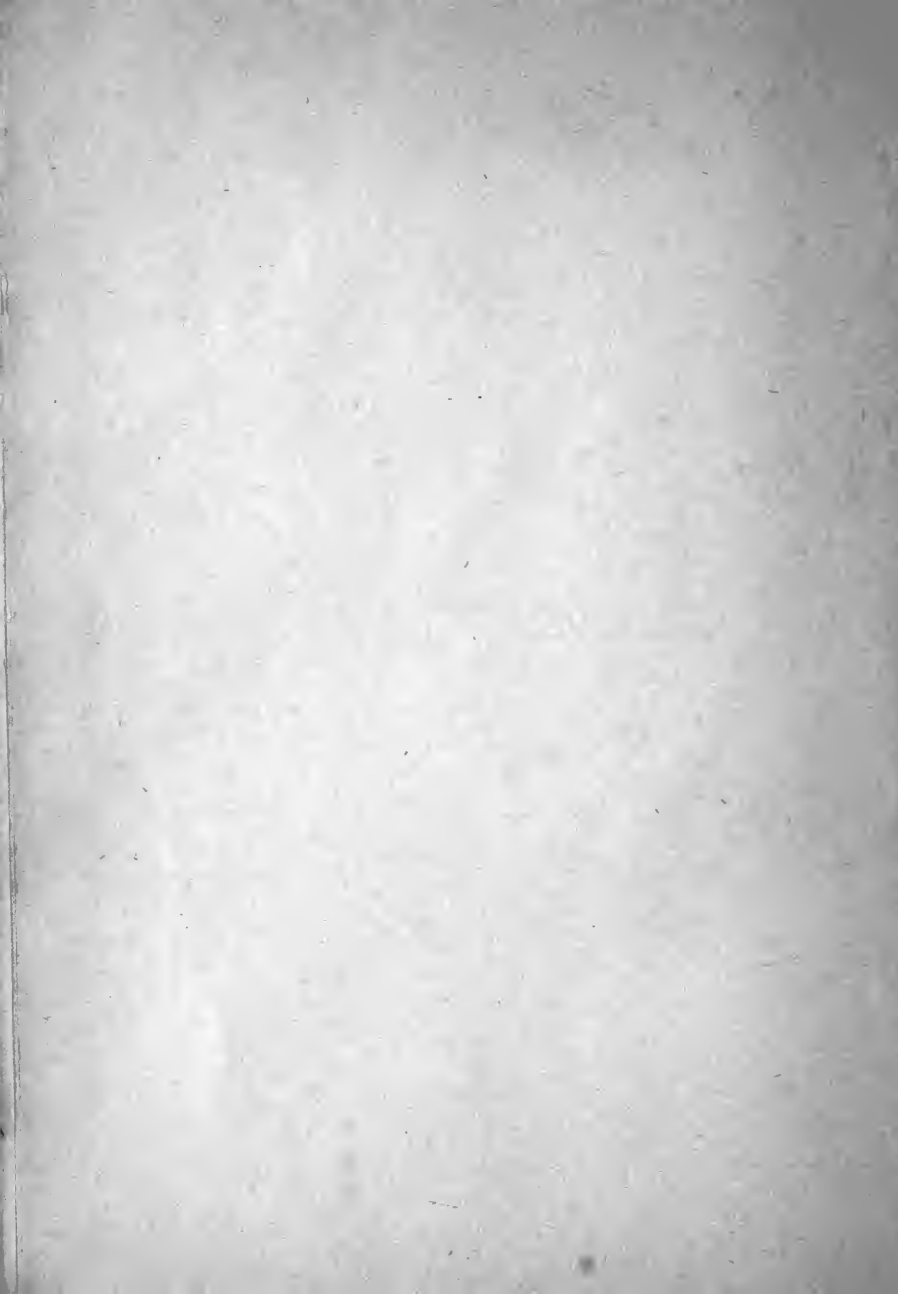
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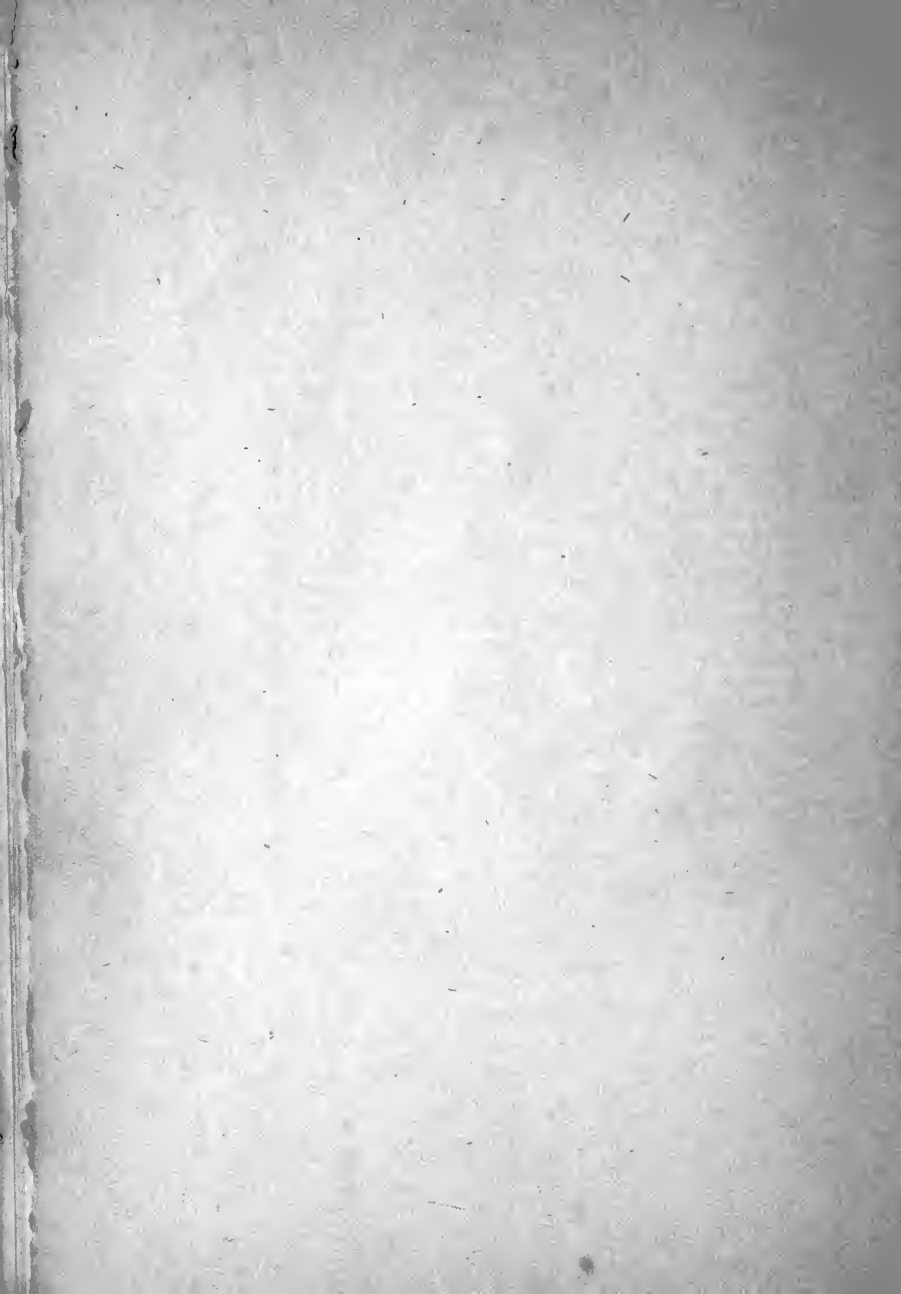
TO MY MOTHER

The most generous critic and the most
loyal friend



I am indebted to Life for permission to republish "Good-bye Summer," "The New Tantalus," and "Incurable," and to the Century Company for permission to republish "The Growsome Girl."

San Francisco,
March, 1909



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A WHISPER.

Across the snowy mountain peaks

Day comes and goes;

The wind amidst the murmuring pines

Or sleeps or blows;

And, in the valley far beneath,

When day is done,

Some little life has ceased to breathe,

Some life begun.

"God's hour," they say; across the darkening land

Sweeps the kind touches of a tender hand;

And lo! upon the morrow, with the sun,

Old seats are empty, and old faces gone.



LONELINESS.

She was here but a moment ago,
She stood by my side; and the sea,
 Tossing grandly and grey
 In the gloom of the day,
Sounded out God's high message to me.

The wind and the rain in my face,
The lonely sand dunes and the shore,
 How I welcomed them, aye
 All the world's beauty lay
In the place; and I asked for no more.

She is gone—she will never return.
The restless sea writhes to each moan;
 And the stricken dunes lie
 Vast, deserted, and I
Am alone with the night; am alone.



AT EVENING.

A strange weird spell of sadness is upon me;
A mingling of a longing and despair
That steals from out the void above, around me,
I know not how or where.

I cannot weep, for tears are idle refuge;
An awe has fallen over me, as when
Some hand shall place me silent at God's footstool,
Snatched from the haunts of men:

And I shall know how little is my presence,
The purpose and the power which I sought;
The tiny hopes and fears and pains and pleasures:
The prize so dearly bought.

Ah, I would lay my head upon your bosom,
Hiding my face, and for a moment seem
The child again, with roseate life before me,
This real life but a dream.

Or in its soft pulsations just forgetting
The world and self, as one
Face downward in the moss and fern and shadow
Forgets the recent sun.

But still the shadowy figure is beside me;
I see it stand; I see it watch and wait;
And weary I arise and struggling follow;
For this, alas, is fate!

AFFINITY.

From the deep shadow of our unjoined lives,
At last we met together, you and I;
Clasped hands; and, gazing in each other's eyes,
Paused for a time and pondered, wonderingly,
Why, in the mighty reaches of life's plain
Our winding paths had never met before;
How long they would commingle, and again,
What time they would divide to meet no more.
Thus pausing and thus dreaming, we forgot
We had been strangers ever, seeing plain,
Whate'er the future brought us, we could not,
In all life's space be strangers e'er again.



LIFE'S PROBLEM.

No doubt the world had gone wrong with him,
His struggles idle, his efforts vain;
A failure, crushed to the world's last rim,
In a garret, purposeless, watching the rain;
"No wonder," the people said, burying him,
"Of the pistol clapped to the brain."

And he? From the midst of the spheres, somewhere,
He watches the worlds in their play through space;
They weave strange webs on the darkened air
By the paths of their whirling that interlace
And sparkle, and die and are born again
As the pictures flash on his brain.

And, out of the depths, for an instant, gleams
One world's whole record; it meets his sight
From birth to ending; the picture seems
Like the sparkle of glittering beads of light,
Each bead a cycle—and lo! in one
His life had ended, his life begun.

He may have dreamed, when he thought he saw
In this bead a dullness which marred its light;
Perhaps his fancy that caught a flaw
In the weaving the worlds flung into the night.
And perhaps it was only an idle thought
That out of the silence a whisper came:
"Behold the universe cheaply bought;
You were asked the price of a second's flame,
One flash—and you gave it not."

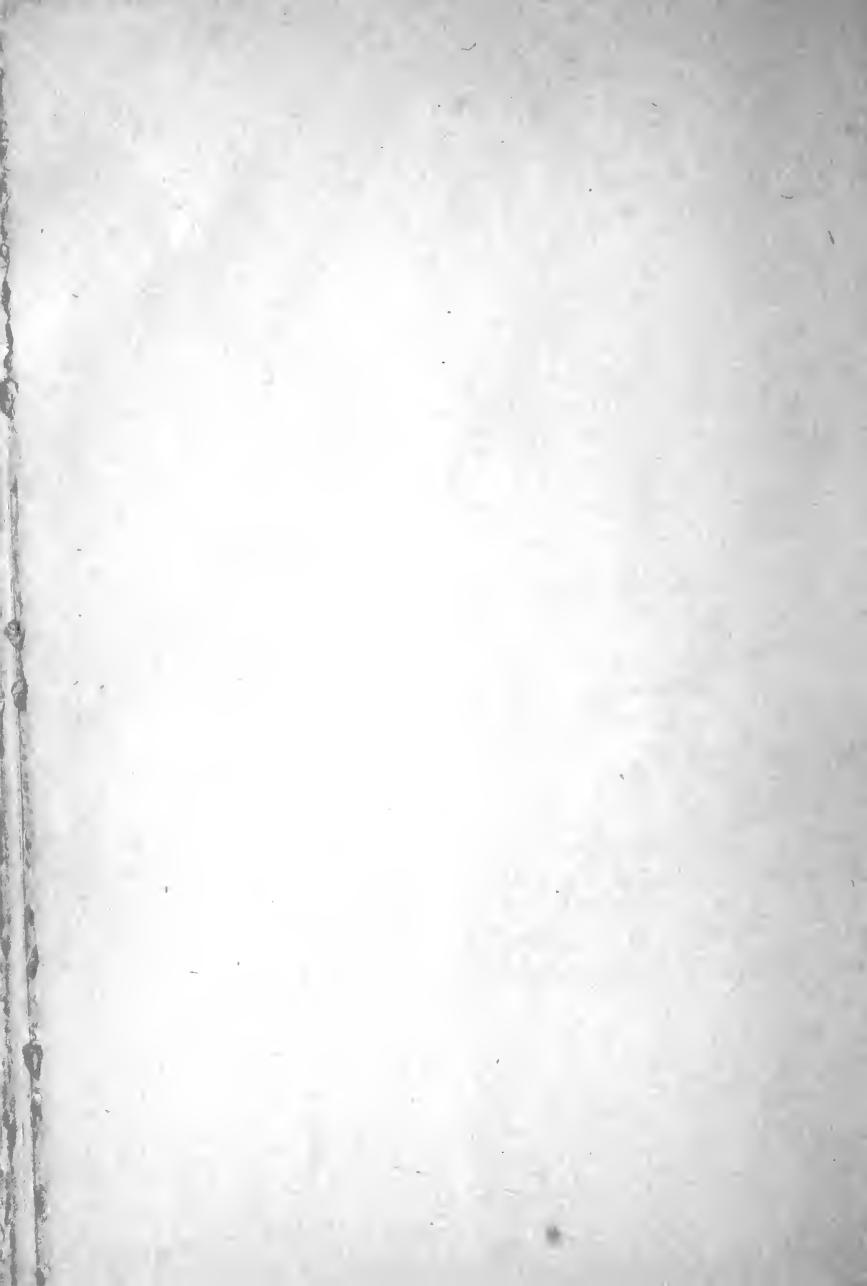
A SEA DREAM.

Loaded down to the water's brim,
Sailing over the quiet bay,
Far to the west, where the setting sun
Gilds the close of a summer day.

Sailing off to the land of dreams,
Following fantasies still to be,
Airy phantoms that beckon it on
Over the breast of the summer sea.

What lies back of the mist and cloud?
Back of the west and the golden haze?
Fairy palaces, fairy isles,
Fairy measure of endless days;

Rest forever for him who sails,
Smoothly, quietly, far away,
Out of the harbor, across the bar,
Over the water, at close of day.



THE BELLS.

On the silence and repose,
Which the evening shadow throws
O'er the city, ere it slumbers in embraces of the night,
Breaks the chime of many bells,
And the varying chorus swells
In a rounding wave of music from the steeple's dizzy height.

Light and joyous, solemn, slow,
Sound the echoes, to and fro,
Loud ascending, sinking, blending, till, at last, they die away;
Ah, how many hopes and fears,
Joyous hours, and days of tears
Have been mingled with their music, since the bells began to sway.

They, who rung them first, are gone;
Like the echoes, one by one,
Sinking slowly, dying, passing out beyond this world of ours;
But the old bells, as of yore,
Watch the sleeping city o'er,
And, in measured intonations, mark the progress of the hours.

And, at times, they seem to say,
In a sadly warning way,
As their voices roll together in a solemn, deep refrain,
 "Time is passing; mark it well;
And while here a space ye dwell,
Labor earnestly and, dying, feel ye have not lived in vain."

RELATIONSHIP.

“Und lehrst mich meine brueder,
Im stillen Busch, im Luft und Wasser kennen.”

Lonely I walked, at night,
In the fields, with the moon on the wane;
All day long had the reaper, with song,
Cut deep in the yellowing grain.

Heavy and warm was the air,
Quiet and silent, like one
Weary with toil in the dry, dusty soil,
And asleep when the daylight is done.

For had come over me, at even tide,
A restless spirit, and unquiet mood
That drove me to the shadow of the wood,
And the calm solace of the grain fields wide.

And I heard voices; not of moving thing,
But quiet whispers from the weeds and grass,
And all the lowly orders that men pass
In daylight careless and unnoticing.

And they held converse, in their own strange way;
And I beheld a great life move them all
In the eternal struggle and their fall,
As though the weeds were men and night were day.

Somehow I felt God's presence growing then
More close about me in the evening air,
And his warm breathing touch and move my hair;
And I returned the purer among men.

EVENING.

Silence falling,
Crickets calling,
Shrilly out from marsh and meadow;
Far away,
Where dies the day,
Drops a mournful veil of shadow.

Fragrance creeping
Where lie sleeping
Tiny wild flowers, softly bending,
Bells of blue
And golden hue
And white and crimson interblending.

Softly, slowly,
Falls a holy
Silence, as of prayer ascending;
Sails are furled,
And the broad world
Rolls swinging into space unending.



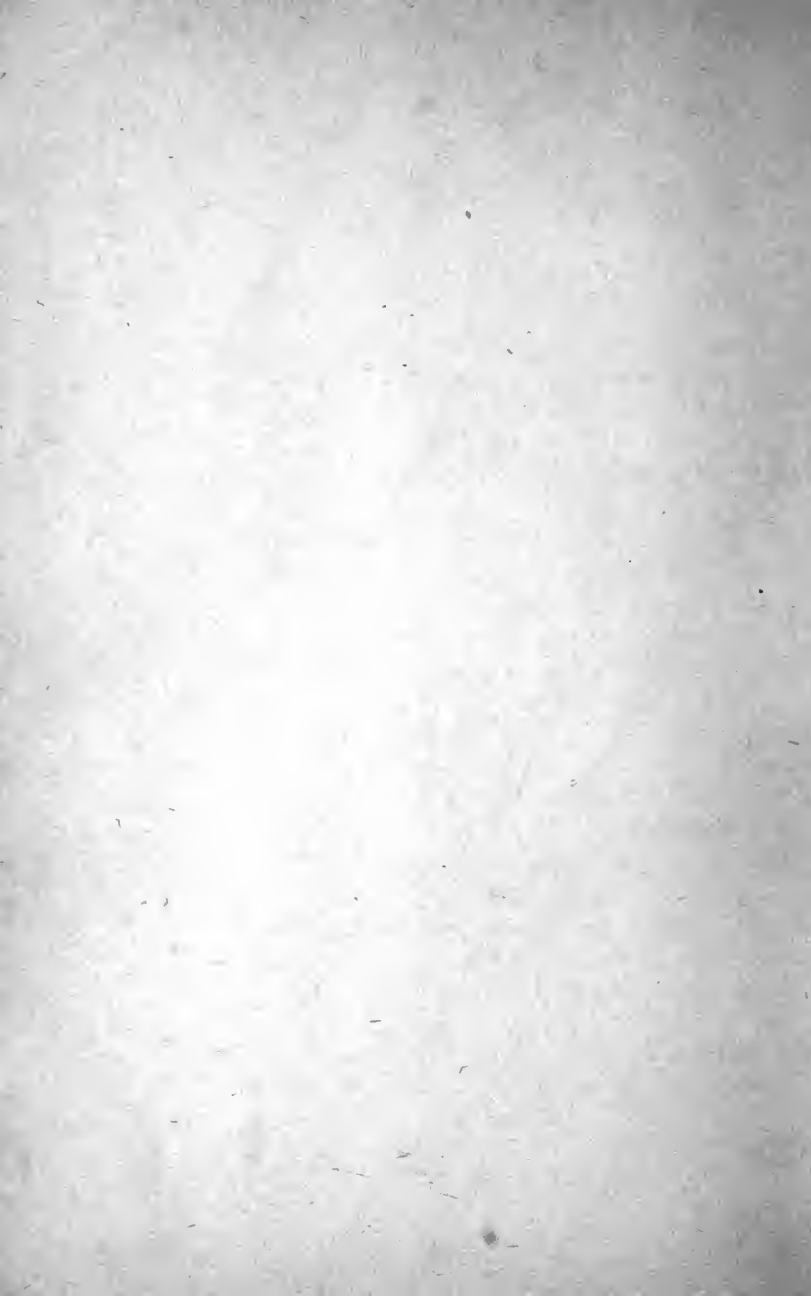
PARTING.

There were tears in your eyes, as you turned them from mine,
While we stood the last time at the wicket together;
And I said to myself, "Pretty jewels, they shine
For our parting to-morrow that may be forever."

Down through the long walk, by the meadow of clover,
We passed once again, ere I bade you good-bye;
The dark, silent shade of the elm trees hung over,
And sorrowed with us, who in sorrow passed by.

Ah, dark was the day and the hour when we parted.
The soft, dewy grasses, the sunshine, the flowers
Were symbols of joy; but we two, broken-hearted,
Turned sadly away, for the joy was not ours.

The rose-bud you charged me to keep as a token,
Recalling the brief life of pleasure we led;
With perfume all vanished and dead petals broken,
Now lies but the symbol of hopes that are fled.



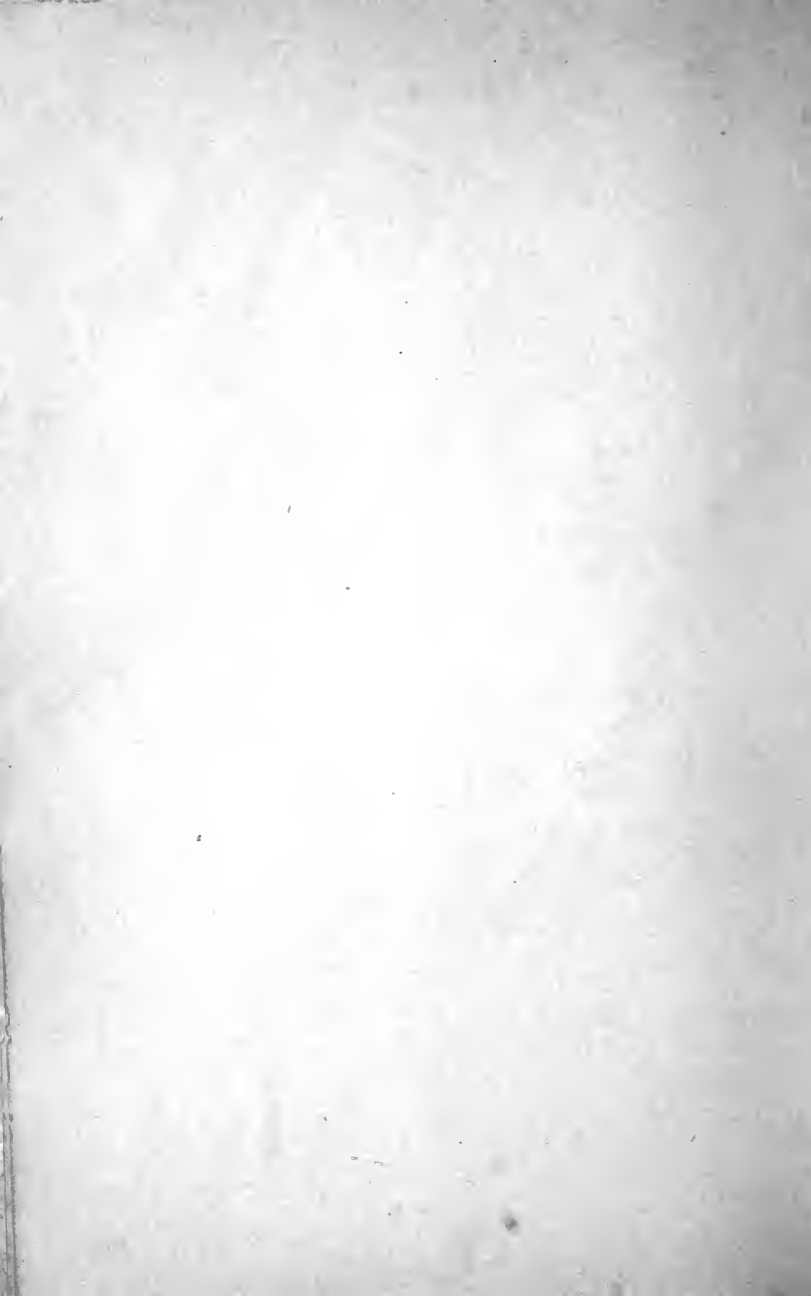
NOVEMBER.

November, November; the dull dead leaves are blown
From barren boughs, and everywhere
A chill is on the frosty air,
And the trees stand shivering, silent, bare,
And the birds have southward flown.

Across, on the hillside, where one lone farm-house stands,
A thin blue line of smoke ascends;
And where the smoke with twilight blends,
It nods and wavers and bows and bends
Like the beckoning of hands.

No life is in the water. No life is in the wood.
And now thou, too, hast turned to go,
The summer, whom we joyed with so,
And soon the ice and frozen snow
Will lie where thou hast stood.

Farewell, then, forever. I turn away alone;
And darker, deeper falls the night
About me, and below the height
Glitters the town with a myriad light,
And a rising wind makes moan.



A FRAGMENT.

The touch of a breeze from the ocean,
The glimmer of waves from the sea,
A low rising moan, and the motion
Of sails, where the fishers may be.

And the shore is deserted and lonely,
And across the wide reaches of sand
No sound from dull chambers, but only
Dead silence abroad in the land.



CRADLE SONG.

Deep in the western gloom the sun is fading,
On the cool air the busy noises die,
All the grand hosts of heaven afar parading
Kindle their signal fires across the sky;
Now through the air the wavering smoke ascending
Tells of the quiet, happy home and rest;
Now to the fold the peaceful sheep are wending,
Now sinks the baby head on mother's breast.

Sleep sweetly baby, sleep sweet and rest,
Pillowed securely on mother's breast;
No care shall haunt thee, no fear attend,
Sleep with the mother, she will defend.

When on the past the shadows have descended,
When over life has spread the twilight shade,
Till at the last the toilsome way is ended,
Gladly resigned the task with joy essayed;

Then, the long tale of strife and turmoil closing
Comes the last silence, silence long and deep,
Then the worn form reclines to its reposing,
Droops the tired head at last in restful sleep.

Sleep sweetly, worn one, sleep sweet and rest,
Pillowed securely on Nature's breast.
No care shall haunt thee, no fear attend,
Sleep with the Father, he will defend.

TO AN OCTOGENARIAN.

On the edge of the grey
Solemn verge of the day,
The calm quiet hush of life's closing,
Stand the feet that have trod
Weary journeys to God,
Longing now for life's rest and reposing.

Years ago, how they stood,
Those same feet, in the flood
Of the sunrise of life pouring o'er them,
And the still untried way
To the ultimate day
Lay bright in the valley before them.

Is it solved for you now,
Bended head, weary brow,
Where the gray hairs repose, which were golden?
Is the secret less strange
In the struggle and change
Of the new life to life that is olden?

Ah, the limitless time,
Ah, the new life sublime
That will come for this old life's undoing.
Then why tremble and fear
As the threshold you near
Of the life that awaits your pursuing.

Gray-haired! Even so.
As the years come and go
They shall wait by the mystical river,
Grown old to the past,
But, in glory at last,
Born heirs to the golden forever.

A FANCY.

In a quaint old Alpine tower,
Gray with sunshine and with shower,
Remnant of despotic power
 Long ago;
High, where flash the swallows winging
An old painted dial is clinging,
And the pendulum goes swinging
 To and fro.

Far below me, faintly ringing,
I can hear a child's voice singing;
Far off, where the hills are springing
 Gleams the sea.
And the village lies a-dreaming,
Where the sunlit shafts are beaming,
And the folks are sleeping, seeming;
 All, save me.

In these ancient walls that hold me
Gently, as a nurse would fold me,
While the droning tale is told me
 Still I lie:
And the grey-beard, old and hoary,
Wakes to action at the story
Of his fame, his youth, his glory
 Long gone by.

“Ah, you should have seen the struggle,
Seen the hot blood boil and bubble,
Dyeing all the yellow stubble
 On the plain;
Casques were flashing, falchions gleaming,
Men despairing, women screaming,
Penons in the on-slaught streaming
 O'er the slain.”

"I could tell, ah, many a story
Of that struggle; now before me,
While you listen, comes the glory,
 Comes the grace
Of a white-robed figure, kneeling
Where the light falls dimmest, stealing,
Slender hands and hair concealing
 Sobbing face."

"And within, behind the oaken
Studded door, their armor broken,
Red and dusty with the token
 Of the fray,
Grim, in silence and despairing,
Only for the last blow caring,
Stands the remnant of the daring,
 Lost that day."

“See! The door is inward battered!
Case and lintel split and shattered!
Blood upon the threshold spattered,
 On the stair!
One by one the arms opposing
Sink into a grim reposing,
Knotted hands upon them closing
 In despair.”

“And that night above them trailing
Golden calm to hush their wailing,
Silently the moon went sailing
 To the west,
Saying, ‘They no more will borrow
Trouble now for other morrow;
They are silent, all their sorrow
 Drowned in rest.’ ”

“Then the flowers came, and the grasses,
Hiding all the well-known passes;
Yonder gleaming torrent flashes
 Over one;
And the wild hawks, undiscovered,
O’er the ruins came and hovered,
Castle ruins crowned and covered
 From the sun.”



A SUGGESTION.

Oh, careless heart,
That still imagines fields supreme, elysian,
Beyond the gold and azure of the day;
Oh, careless feet, and all too careless vision,
That spurns nor heeds the flowers upon the way,
Heaven's lesser part.

Look close at hand.
The daily world, that smiles its modest blessing,
The streams that, flowing gently, speak of rest,
The breeze that bears within it a caressing
Fresh from God's hand, are these not things at best
Worthy to understand.

Who will not see
The love that lies about us every day;
The dust and stones and heat and toil forgetting,
Enjoying life's small gifts upon the way;
To him will that strange land beyond life's setting
More perfect be?



IN MEMORIAM.

Be hushed, be still, oh, babbling words of science,
Oh talk of creeds, oh pratter of wise lore;
Draw breath and listen, for behold a timid
Sweet learner passes to the vales you would explore.

With shrinking feet, alone and unattended,
No echo from the unresisting sod,
Into the valley of the darkening shadow
She fades, a spirit gone to meet her God.

What meets her there? Would you not give to know it
The hoarded wisdom that your volumes hold?
Perhaps a touch, a kiss within the darkness,
A start of waking wonder, and behold—

Oh, simple faith. Why did we not obey you?
Oh, love Divine. Oh, Father, tender, mild.
How simple seems it now. An easy riddle
Set for the guessing of a little child.



HEAVE HO.

Heave Ho, merrily Ho,
See the wind belly our sail!
Heave Ho, merrily Ho,
Look at the foam in our trail!
There, on the shores where the houses be,
A figure is waving farewell to me,
And her eyes, they will follow me over the sea
Till the light in the west grows pale.

Heave Ho, joyfully Ho,
Let the breeze follow us free;
Heave Ho, joyfully Ho,
Far to the south sail we;
South to the seas where the islands lie
Under an azure and melting sky
Golden sands where the ripples die
Faint from the slumbrous sea.

Heave Ho, wearily Ho,
Mariner out of the west;
Heave Ho, wearily Ho,
Drop the stiff anchor and rest;
Ah, but no figure upon the shore
Gives hail to the wanderer, home once more.
There's an empty cottage, and over the door
A spider is spinning its nest.

AN EASTER SONG.

Gone is the sun, below the verge descended;

Gone is the sun; and come are night and gloom;
Hushed are the joyous songs of birds and ended

Life's happy hopes, enshrouded in the tomb.

Rest, timid heart. Rest till the morning lightens;

Dream not of doubt, dream not of doubt or pain;

Lo, in the east, again the sunlight brightens,

In golden glory day will come again.

Hid in the earth the seed lies buried lowly,

Pressed 'neath the sod, forgotten in the mold;

Lost is the form and beauty of it wholly,

Beaten by storms, enwrapped by winter's cold.

Trust, timid heart. Trust in the future's bringing,

Dream not of doubt, dream not of doubt or pain;

Lo, from the soil the tender shoot is springing,

Winter has passed and Spring has come again.

Shut is the soul, by fleshly confines bounded,
Hid is the soul beneath the worldly sod;
Deep in the gloom, by woe and sin surrounded,
Lost is the shape and essence of a God.
Wait, timid heart. Wait till the appointed hour;
Dream not of doubt, dream not of doubt or pain;
Lo, o'er the tomb the might of God has power,
Gloom will dissolve and God be God again.

REQUIESCAT.

Peace! Peace! Beyond the waves that break
Tumultuous on life's troubled shore,
She lies at rest, she will not wake,
She will not strive forevermore.

Her hands are folded on her breast,
There is a smile upon her face;
Ah, God, how perfect is her rest,
How calm and quiet all the place.

She does not hear the praise we bring,
She does not heed our jarring wars,
But silently, on angel wing
She floats beyond the viewless stars.

Come, leave the spot. We have no place,
We living with this perfect rest;
Cover the unresponsive face
And leave her. She alone is blest.



INTERLACHEN.

I looked from a tall tower in the town,

And, in the distance, far as one might see,
Caught the blue glimmer of a water's edge
And dreamed "It is the sea."

Below me lay the houses, baked in sun,

And pigmy people darkened all the way;
And the green hills rolled outward from the town
And in the cool blue distance, glory-crowned
The Alps shut in the day.

An ivy clung upon the ancient wall,

I knew it from the few stray leaves that lay
In dusty slumber where the spider spun
And the long lances of the yellow sun
Moved slow and lazily.

I felt the ivy cling about the stones,

I listened to the great clock's hollow tones,

As down and back the pendulum went swinging,
And great tears dimmed my eyes, as, one by one,
Weird figures came of men and seasons gone,
And, from the shade below, a child's voice singing.

Green fields, blue waters and the sun,
No change has come to one of you;
Green grasses wave, clear waters run,
And yonder sky has still its blue.

But where are ye, O earnest hearts
Who knew these beauties years ago?
Who may have walked these grasses through
Who may have sailed yon silent sea,
Who may have dreamed, as now I do,
Perplexed at life's great mystery.

Can it be that the flowers and the grasses,
Refreshed by the touch of the rain,
Are the flowers and grasses of old time
Recalled to their glory again?

Can it be that the lily I gather
Holds, hid in its innermost cell,
Some touch of the lily that faded,
Crushed down when a warrior fell?

Can it be that unto dust as men return
Some cycle of great change
Rolls onward, and the dust renews again
A new life and a strange?

But lo, below the mountain peaks the sun has set,
And the child's song is hushed, and the long grass with
dew is wet.



"OVER THE WALNUTS AND THE WINE."

Over the walnuts and the wine
Thoughts will go a-straying;
Deep in the heart of the winter-time
Love will go a-maying;
And I dream, as I tip my glass,
Of a day perfumed by the new-born grass
And a shaded lane where the people pass
And the children linger playing.

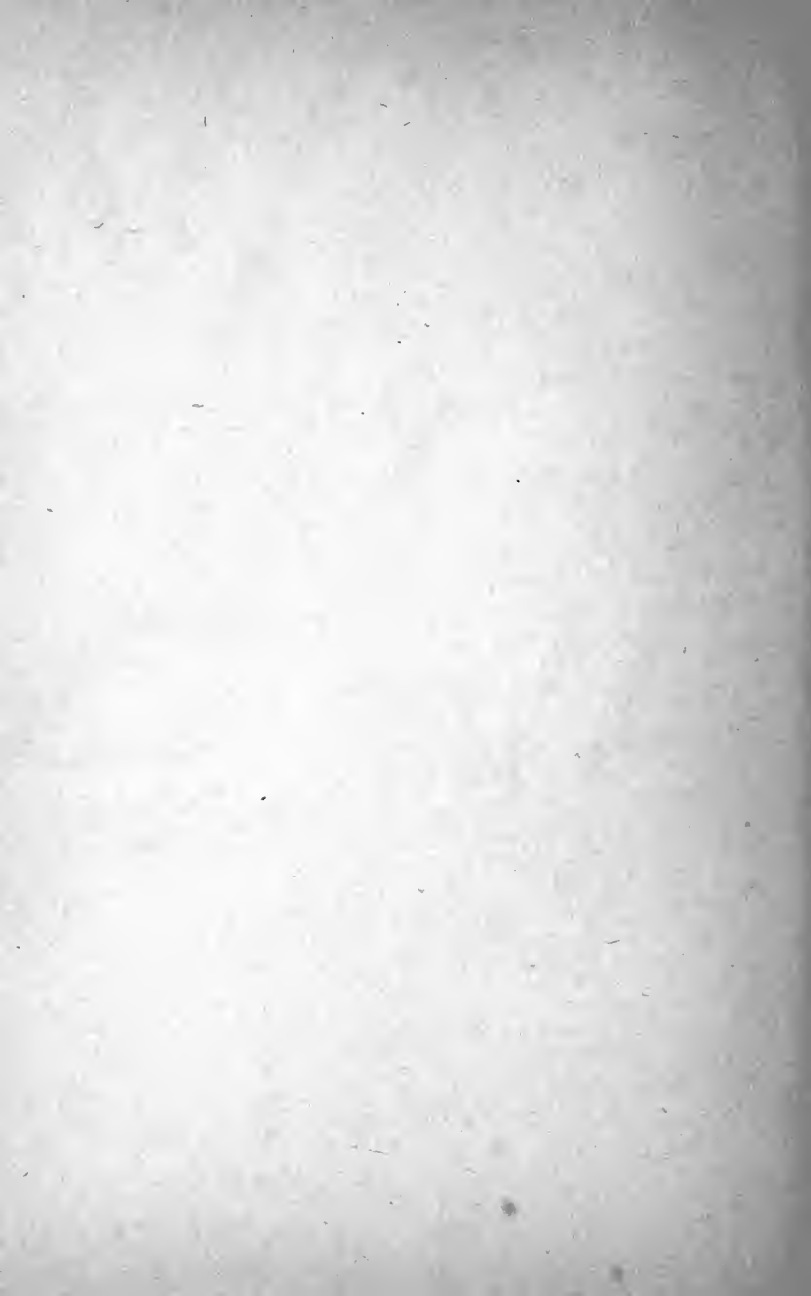
I know a spot in this shaded lane,
A nook in the hawthorn hidden
Where the blossoms fall in a snow-white rain
And the breezes kiss unhidden.
A spot where all day one may lie
With just a glimpse of the clear blue sky
And just a song as the stream runs by,
By the nodding lilies hidden.

And a face looks over the hawthorn hedge,
A face that comes to chide me,
While the snow lies white on my window ledge,
And the fire burns bright beside me.
Perchance I chose wisely to follow the track
Where reason led, but where love held back,
For fortune and honor are mine, but alack!
My empty rooms deride me.

A SEA SONG.

At sea, Love,
To be, Love,
Is half of life to me, Love;
With wind and spray
To wash away
The cares that should not be, Love;
For, lo, the waste before us
Gives back the merman's chorus,
And soft dreams lie within the sky
That stretches kindly o'er us.

But you, Love,
Pursue, Love,
My thoughts the blue wave through, Love,
Nor ever stray
Far, far away,
Though I am far from you, Love;
For in the blue waves springing,
Is echo of your singing;
And soft the press of your caress
To every breeze is clinging.



GOOD-BYE SUMMER.

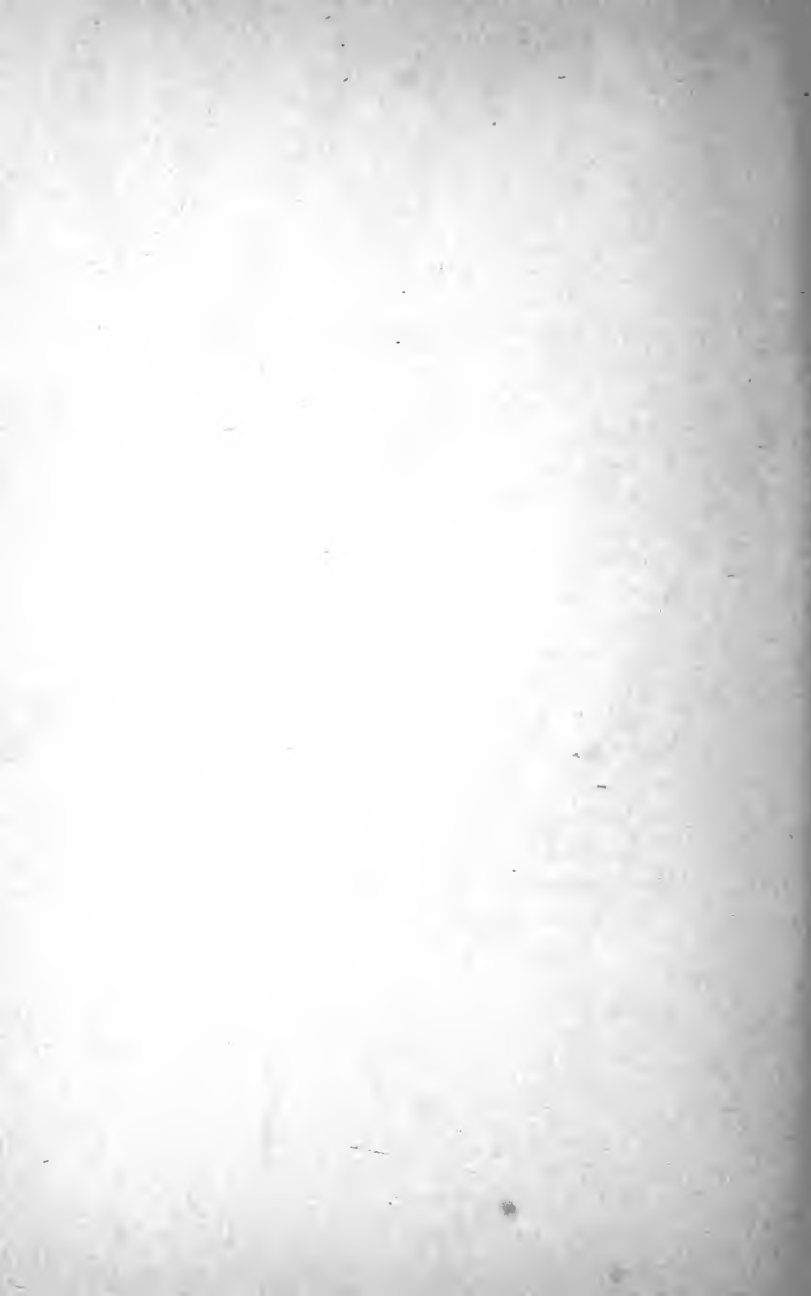
“Could it have been that last June was the time of it?
Surely it was, or the first of July.

Now that your question has put me in mind of it,
Isn't it strange how the time has gone by?”

“Call on us when we return to the City. I
Hope our acquaintance is not to end here.”

(Her Sister.)

“Come, father's waiting, Grace, hurry and say good-bye;
There, now he's off. Why, you're crying, My Dear!”



LOVE'S MESSAGE.

Here is a cluster of flowers,
And the secret they carry, My Dear,
Is mine; but will shortly be ours,
If you'll hold them awhile to your ear.
Not distant, as strangers might speak,
And formal, but pressed let them be
To the down of your beautiful cheek,
While they whisper and tell you of me.

I would, in their place, I might dare
To tell what I send them to say;
And, close to your billowy hair,
While your eyes turn demurely away
I might whisper my thoughts, for I know,
Though friendly and faithful to me,
No flowers could whisper just so
As I, Love, would whisper to thee.



A VALENTINE.

Let these roses, mignonette,
 Violets and daisies,
Teach you never to forget,
 Wandering in Love's mazes,
That another stands and waits
Patiently without those gates.

All within is bright to thee,
 All without is dreary;
Open then the gates to me,
 I'll repay it dearly.
Love the God is blind, they say;
Let me in to show the way.



THE REASON.

Eleanor is young and fine,

Truly so;

Shall I ask her to be mine?

Ah, no, no.

Thorns too often hide where roses blow.

Margaret, by the garden walk,

Spies a lily on its stalk,

And she bends above it,

Crying, "Ah, the lily; see,

Is it not the flower for thee?

Pure and white; I love it."

But I say,

"Come away.

Thorns prefer, when perfume is to pay."

Aye, the rose is sweet, I ween,
And the lily, on its green
 Stalk below.
But I've found, the grasses under,
One sweet little flower alone;
And the people, still they wonder
Why I walk in paths asunder;
They will never wiser be
If they wait to learn from me:
 'Tis enough I know.

TO MY LOST LOVE.

Will it ever be we shall meet again,
You and I in this earthly place?
Shall I hear your voice, shall I touch your hand,
And look again in your face?

Look again into those deep, dark eyes,
Whose fathomless meaning I longed to know,
To read the secret their depths concealed,
And you kept it hid, in the long ago.

We will meet but as friends, when we meet at last;
I will clasp your hand as you, too, clasp mine
But the joy will be barren, Oh, Love, at best,
The bitterest dregs of an unquaffed wine.

It will be so. Yet I know, I know,
This current that sets so strong, so true,
Will find its goal in some future day;
And I wait for that day and you.



GOOD-BYE SWEETHEART

“Good-bye, Sweetheart.” You said “Good-bye”
And leaned to me across the stile,
And there were tear drops in your eye,
But on your lips a trembling smile.

All bold enough I strode away;
But somehow, as I climbed the hill,
I could not help but glance your way
To see if you were watching still.

Too far it was to see your eyes,
Too far to catch the tearful smile,
Only to know, if that were wise,
You still were leaning on the stile.

From out the woods the long train drew,
And, through the meadow rushing down,
Its shrill, defiant whistle blew,
And passed into the distant town.

But nought to me were field and wood,
Wild train or wilder busy town,
As in the chestnut shade the hood
That from your hair had fallen down,

I loosed again and saw your face,
As backward to the house we went,
Lose its strange trouble, pace by pace,
And settle to a calm content.

INCURABLE.

Said I, "If Koch, with mystic lymph
Can slay the wild bacilli,
And break the fierce bacteriae
To harness, willy nilly,
Perhaps, with proper focus, I
Can learn the reason why
I've lost my health and cannot sleep,
And seem inclined to die.

And so I set my lenses straight,
With most especial care,
And on my nervous system brought
Their focal power to bear.
And at the very slightest glance
I found, alas! I had
A case of Arabella Jones,
And had it very bad.



THE UNFORTUNATE AMBITION OF McMANUS McNUTT.

You would not have said, to have looked at him, he
Was possessed in the very remotest degree,
Of traits that were any wise notable, but—
There was quite a good deal to McManus McNutt.

He was not a beauty; that all would admit.
His ears were too large and his feet didn't fit,
And you never could tell where he fastened his eyes;
But his efforts in art were a constant surprise.

For McManus McNutt had a musical soul,
Which he constantly poured through a very small hole;
And his neighbors remarked, as he tooted his toot,
"He's an angel, or ought to be—he and his flute."

And when Mr. McNutt was incited to song,
The whole of the twenty-fifth precinct went wrong;
You could hear the remarks from the first to the sea,
And 'twas that caused the riot in avenue "D."

"Thorough Base," said McNutt, "I am learning each day."
"Is it second or third," said a friend, "that you play?"
"Neither one," said McNutt, "I'm just learning to sing."
And they tried him on second just once in the spring.

" 'Tis not to his efforts objection we find,"
Said his intimate friends, "We would not be unkind;
And we do not protest at the means he employs;
But he constant keeps up such a H— of a noise."

"And we think, and we very suggestively say,
That when Mr. McNutt is inspired to play,
And to burst into song or render those airs,
He ought to go out and perform to the bears."

Now McNutt didn't go and the noise didn't stop,
Till the imminent crisis at last took a drop;
And thereafter calm peace settled over things, but—
'Twas a peace that was visibly minus McNutt.

MORAL

'Tis a troublesome thing when a man has a brain
That causes his neighbors' affection a strain;
And a dangerous state of the atmosphere springs
From a small inspiration with five-dollar wings.

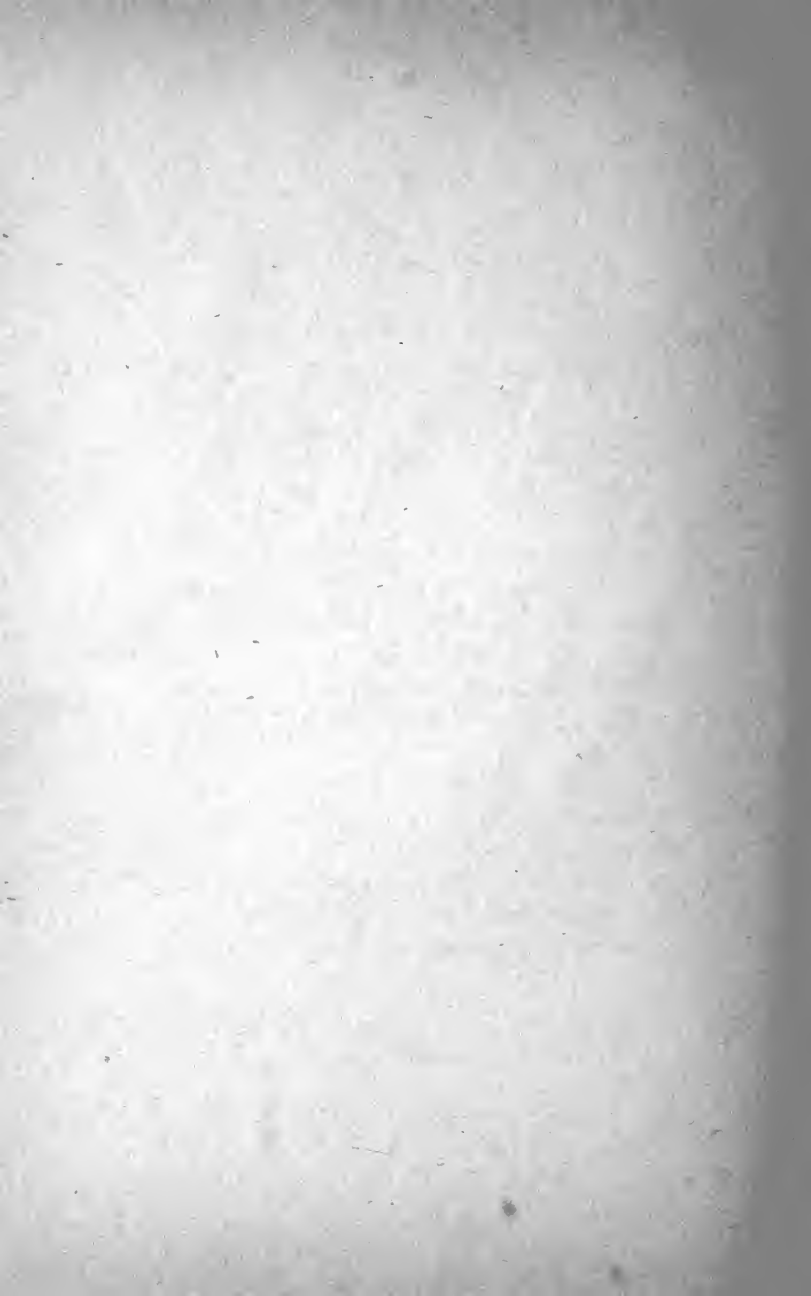


CONFUSION.

Pretty Jennie came to me,
Anxious, seeking information.
"Show me, Richard, will you please,
What is meant by osculation?"

What could mortal man as I
Do in such a situation,
Father, Mother, no one by;
Liberal views, a strong temptation?

Jennie is my cousin, too.
So, to please my young relation—
"Oh, you horrid thing, there now,
I referred to occultation."



AN IDLE.

He sat on the shore, as the sun went down,
Went down in the depths of the wide, wide west;
To a chance observer it might have seemed queer
That he didn't go home, as the night drew near,
But he didn't, and therefore it might appear
That the sitter himself knew best.

He sat on the shore when the morning sun
Shone out from the east over sea and land.
He sat, I remark, as the sun arose,
On the very same spot where he sat at the close
Of the previous day; and the Lord only knows
Why he did it, I don't understand.

Perhaps he was searching for coral reefs;
Perhaps he was trying to keep him cool;
Perhaps the breezes from over the sea,
As they toyed with his tresses, said, "Come to me."
The field of conjecture is wide, you see.
Perhaps he was only a fool.



IDA AT HER KNITTING.

Clothed in red, the chair behind her,
Large and cosy for her sitting,
Here I enter, and I find her,
Cousin Ida at her knitting.

O'er the work her head is bending,
Quickly, light the fingers flitting;
And I wonder are there blending
Pleasant fancies with her knitting.

There perhaps are fields of clover,
Summer odors, swallows flitting,
Evening shadows, and a lover
Mingling with this dainty knitting.

Yes. The smile, the blushes show it;
Dainty blushes mounting, flitting.
'Tis some lover. But I know it
Is not I. So hang the knitting.



TO MY NIECE MAUD.

You are young, Oh niece Maud. You but newly
Are born; and I know you'll allow
That I can't be expected to truly
Be greatly impressed by you now.

You are young, and I might say bald-headed,
Lack teeth, and your color is high;
And you have, Ah Mon Dieu, as I dreaded,
A strong disposition to cry.

You are young, and of course are delighted,
(See Pope) with a rattle or straw:
While I, your dear uncle, am knighted,
A counsellor, learned in the law.

I repeat, then, 'tis not to be looked for,
Admiration from me, Dearest Wench,
While you baby-kingdom are booked for,
And I, it may be, for the bench.

But wait, oh niece Maud, for time's flying;
Have patience. Revenge will be sweet
When they, who your toes are now gying,
Will kneel as your slaves at your feet.

And I—I shall flee from the dreaded,
Perhaps from the merited chaff;
For I shall lack teeth, be bald-headed,
And you—Ah Mon Dieu, you will laugh.

TO TWO FRIENDS

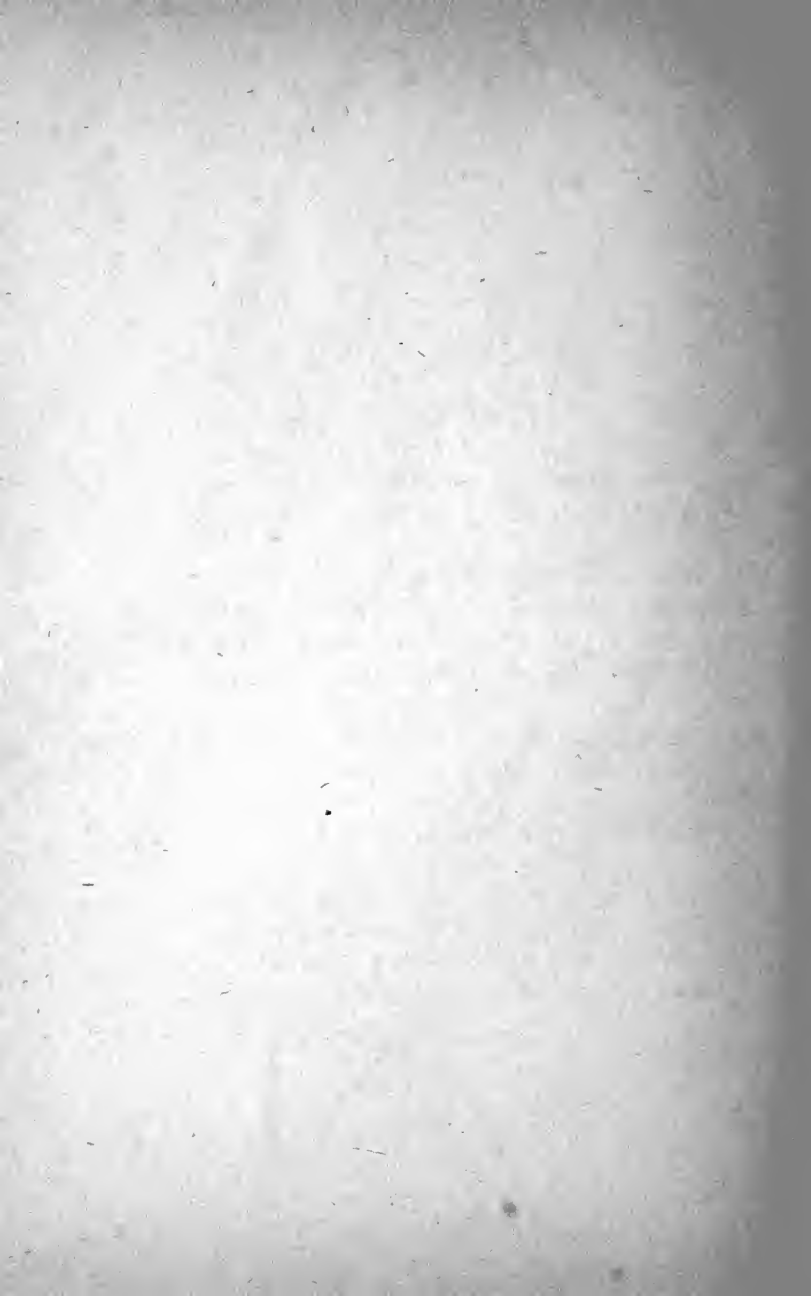
(On receiving their photographs.)

Though, forsooth, no gift was due me,
Since you kindly send me one,
May I ask nymphs if, beshrew me,
Pictured forms are all I've won?

I should grieve, if I imagined
All these lengths of happy days
Could be measured by the limning
Of a few collected rays.

And that while I dreamed, conceiving,
"Lo, I own them every one."
Waking, I should simply find me
Debtor to the fickle sun.

No. Full thanks for these two faces
But, at best, when all is said,
Let me whisper I'd prefer it
If you'd sent yourselves, instead.



THE NEW TANTALUS.

He discourses on astronomy with very best intention,
And mentions many matters I'd not previously known;
But, for some especial reason I have no desire to mention,
I should much prefer the garden with Matilda all alone.

The balmy air is odorous with perfume of the flowers,
And the moonlight on the terrace is most beautiful to see;
But professor is excited, and I know he'll talk for hours,
While Matilda's in the garden all alone expecting me.

It's well, of course, to know about these subjects; the propriety
Of telling which is Saturn, and the distance to the moon
Is obvious; it gives a certain standing in society;
But, somehow, on this evening I've a great desire to spoon.

O moon, O stars, O milky way! I care not for your density;
Your perigee and apogee possess no charm for me;
Look down, look down in pity from your silent, vast immensity
And let me join the figure there beside that apple tree.



AN ANSWER.

(Written for a young lady named Rose, as her answer to an ancient who had sent her some amorous verses.)

I don't care a D——
For an ass or a clam,
And therefore, My Excellent Poet,
The sequence is true
That I don't care for you,
And I think it is time you should know it.

When the season has come
That one tooth in the gum
Is all that one's smiling discloses,
It is time to retire,
My Dear Sir, to the fire;
The winter's no season for roses.



THE WAIL OF THE PESSIMIST.

Oh, the world that my infancy pondered
As I lay in my cradle and wondered;
 How it passed in surprise
 By my wide open eyes,
 From the great fearful cat,
 To my father's tall hat;
These are not now as strange as they might be;
My father's hat does not affright me;
 And the cat only serves
 To impinge on my nerves
As it wails in the back garden nightly.

Oh, the joys that in boyhood were brimming,
The hunting, the fishing, the swimming;
 The plunge, after school,
 In the wide, quiet pool,
 Just above the old mill
 Where the lilies lay still;

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3
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3 3

I don't think this now would delight me;
I know that the leeches would bite me;
 There would follow a chill,
 And a large quinine pill,
And red flannel around the throat tightly.

Oh, the girl that my youthfulness courted,
As under the green-wood we sported;
 The blue tender eyes
 With their glance of surprise;
 The hand that I took
 With so loving a look;
I can't call her married name rightly;
They say she is far, far from sightly;
 Of her eyes of deep blue,
 One is glass, and her hue
Is carnation. I dream of it nightly.

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THE LITTLE OLD MAN IN THE MOON.

The little old man in the moon, Ha, Ha!

Has come with an appetite hearty;

Has come all the way from the land which, they say,
Lies far out of sight in the depths of the night,

All gloomy, and lonely, and quiet;

He has brought his large spoon,

And he's come none too soon,

For the stars are all fat,

And they're plenty, at that;

And I know, if he tries,

He'll improve on his size,

For stars are an excellent diet.

The queer little man in the moon, He, He!

Is satisfied, jolly and cozy;

For his stomach has grown till he can't walk alone,

But he rolls all the day in a singular way,

Like a large rubber ball, but more cheerful;

He's quite happy, you see,
But it wouldn't suit me,
For I know that his size
Is a source of surprise,
And if fatter he grows
He cannot see his toes,
And that, I should think, would be fearful.

The sad little man in the moon, Ho, Ho!
Has come to a very hard trial;
For the stars are all gone, and he hasn't left one;
He has eaten them all, both the great and the small,
The great big bear star and its brother.
A week now has passed
Since he ate up the last,
And he's gone without dinner
And grown so much thinner
That I fear, by and by,
He'll not be in the sky,
And we'll have to go look for another.



THE CYNIC SMILE OF PAN.

From out the cushioned easy chair
I study the luxurious room;
The light is shaded, and the air
Made heavy with a rich perfume;
And, waiting for my lady, I,
From dreamland, suddenly descry,
Behind a screen, a bust of Pan,
And catch the cynic smile of Pan.

My lady comes; the airs, the grace
Are perfect in her, and I vow
I never saw a sweeter face,
Or loved a maid as dear as now;
With reverent homage on my lips,
I kiss her dainty finger tips,
And raise my eyes her face to scan,
But catch the cynic smile of Pan.

And so through life as it has been,
And so through life as it may be,
Perchance I find the painted screen
Whence something mocking looks at me.
Perchance Dame Nature builds my life
On such a settled, subtle plan,
That always, back of pleasant things,
I catch the cynic smile of Pan.

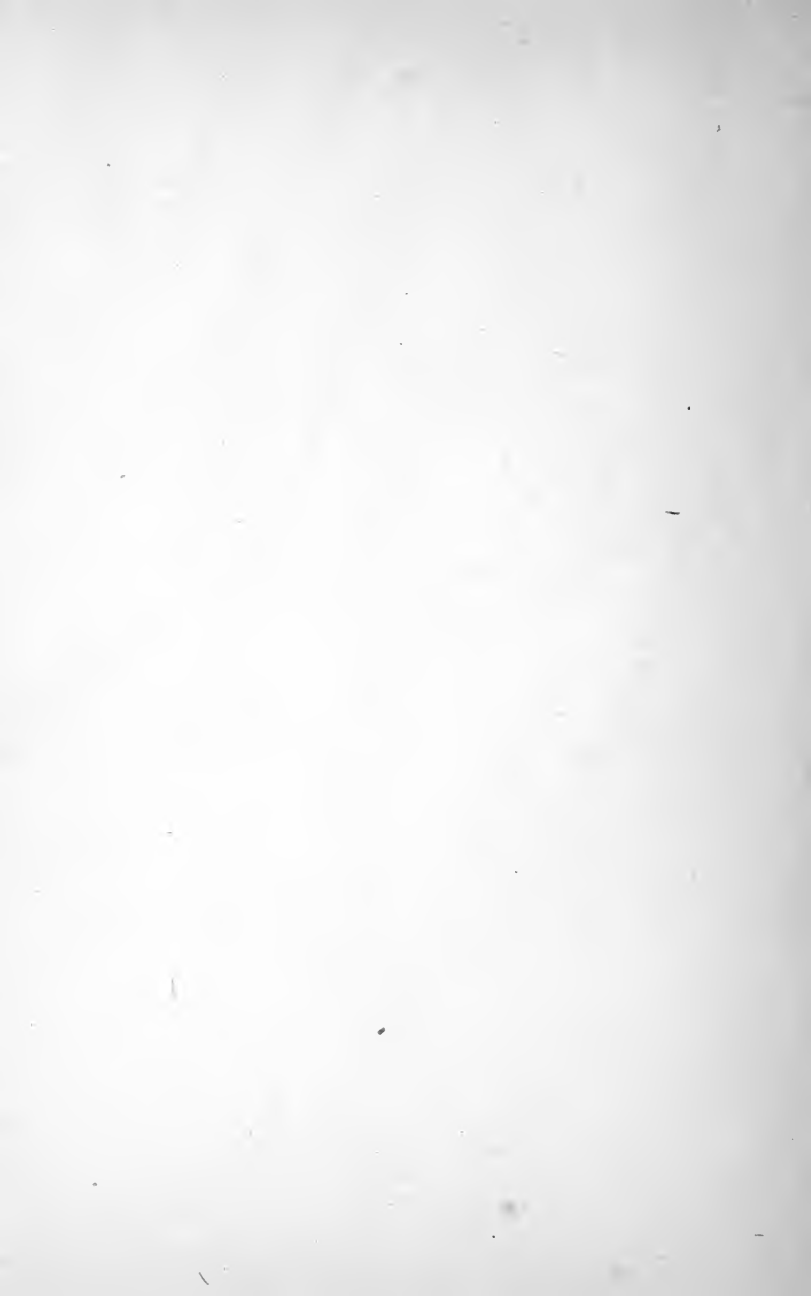
THE SERENADES

(Scene I. Time, 10 p. m.)

Oh, maiden, fair maiden,
The stars are shining bright,
And I, Love, am nigh, Love,
To woo thee out to-night.
Then haste thy sweet replying,
The summer night is dying,
Come forth and ease my sighing,
Come forth, my Soul's Delight.

(Scene II. Time, 10 a. m.)

Oh, Doctor, dear Doctor,
Give me an herb or pill;
For I, Sir, must die, Sir,
If I can't check this chill.
There's fun, no doubt, parading
All night, and serenading;
But there's no fun in trading
A Cupid for a squill.



THE GREWSOME GIRL.

She was a charming little girl,
With hair that fell in one long cue;
And she was meek as meek could be,
But when, one day, she came to me
And said, "I done it" for "I did,"
Down from my nose my glasses slid,
I opened very wide my eyes—
I did this to express surprise—
And said, in voice that grew some grew,
"This will not do."

She often folded in her lap
Her hands, and like a saint she seemed;
She sat for hours and hours that way,
But when, one day, I heard her say
"I seen it," when she should have said
"I saw it," I but shook my head,
Took my galoshes from the shelf
And in the rain walked by myself,
Remarking, "She's not what she seemed,
I dreamed, I dreamed."

Oh, little girls with yellow hair,
And angel looks, beware, beware!
Be very careful what you say,
Don't drive your dearest friends away
By fearful grammar; and when you
Don't know exactly what to do,
Or say—say nothing. No real saint
Was ever known to say, "I ain't."

THE FIRST LOVE.

The old chestnut tree at the window
Was leafy with joy of the June,
And the crickets, from over the play-ground,
Sang merrily out to the noon,
When, clad in pink frock and sun-bonnet,
Looking bashful, but sweet and so cool,
You came, Susan Miggs, with your mother,
To enter the old district school.

Ah, sad was my heart, when I pondered
On the chasm I saw intervene
'Twixt a girl who was neat and so pretty,
And me, who felt far, far from clean;
For my every-day hat, it was brimless,
I was wearing no shoes, and, although
I knew not correct styles in trousers,
I felt mine were not *comme il faut*.

But I kept a brave heart in my sorrow,
I did what I felt was the thing
To win your regard, and I struggled
As heroes have fought for their king.
For out on the play-ground at recess,
In a careless and nonchalant way,
I stood on my head and pretended
It was something I did every day.

What days ere I dared to address you,
What days ere I felt it was right
To bring you an apple. I stole it,
And was whipped for your sake that same night;
And then, by a process so subtle
I never could quite understand,
We had fathomed each other's deep feeling,
And walked home from school hand in hand.

Ah, days of the pure, young affections!

Could I feel as I used to feel then,
Susan Miggs, life would carry some value—

I should be as a king among men.
But try as I may, and I have tried

A thousand or more times, I think,
I cannot enkindle a rapture

For tender young maidens in pink.



VANITAS.

“Vanitas! Yea, Vanitatum!”

Monk, the song wells forth full surely

From your heart, I do believe it,

As you pass me by demurely,

With bowed head, and downcast eye,

Rapt in earnest ecstasy.

“Vanitas! Yea, Vanitatum!”

Ah, but do you really mean it,

As you look into the shadow

Of the world as you have seen it?

In the days when love was young:

Days when other songs were sung?

“Vanitas! Yea, Vanitatum!”

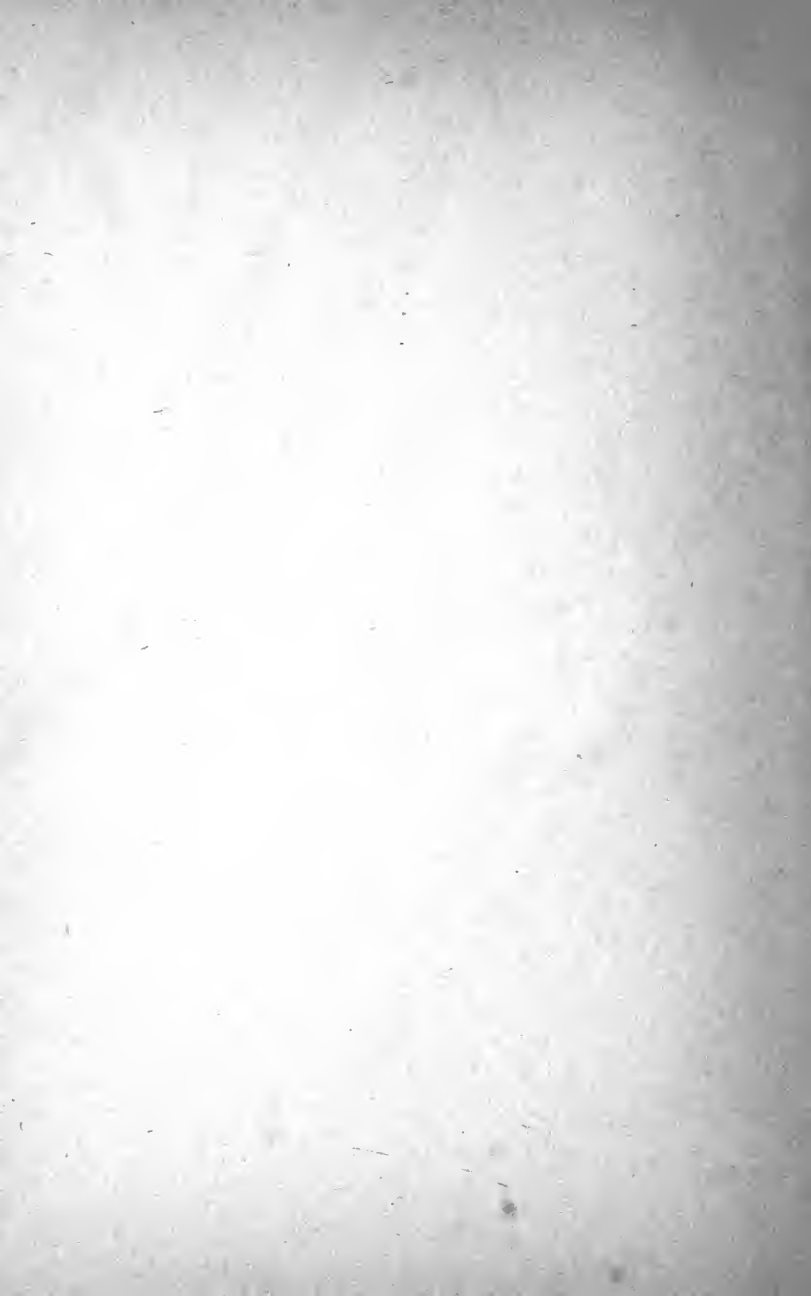
Even as your voice may cry it,

Comes a sweet face from oblivion,

Rising softly to deny it.

And so full of love it glows!

Monk, what means this faded rose?



TO MISS S. (a stranger.)

I cannot write a verse to you,
Pray think me not a dunce,
But kindly bear in mind that I
Have only met you once.

I cannot write a verse to you,
And, faith, with muse so ailing,
I shall not be surprised to hear
You thank me for thus failing.



TO MR. M. (a Scotchman.)

Of old, when the lion emitted a wail,
'Twould be found, upon closer inspection,
That a piece of Scotch thistle had stuck in his tail,
Which, of course, would explain his dejection.
But now that the rose and the thistle are one,
Combined in a peaceful communion,
The ostrich and eagle advance hand in hand
To dance at the fortunate union.



A VALENTINE BY THE AGED.

I hope, Dear, you'll remember, when you gaze upon these flowers,
That they represent much labor, though their voices may be
dumb;

Why, after I had gathered them, I must have sat for hours
Endeavoring vainly to extract the thorns from out my thumb.

I didn't know the grass was wet, till I had waded through it,
And I had my carpet slippers on, and my dressing-gown as well;
And Jane has asked me frequently, "How I ever came to do it."
Which, really, when I think of it, I find it hard to tell.

I've caught a most distressing cold, my back and legs are aching,
And my dressing-gown is ruined; it was pongee of the best:
And I fear I have the prospect of a week or more of shaking,
With mustard baths and quinine and a plaster on my chest.

I wouldn't mind, if I could feel you'd cherish these, my flowers,
Or would think upon me kindly as I sit with aching bones;
But I strongly am inclined to think you'll keep them a few hours,
Replacing them by others from that worthless fellow Jones.

SONG.

Did you ever see a man with his legs so thin
You thought he'd break them off;
With a melancholy whisker on his chin,
And a hectic midnight cough?
I knew such a man, when I was young,
In the town from which I came;
And you thought he'd do, till he handed you
A card which bore his name.
For his name was Reginald Archibald Prettyman,
Why, I never could tell.
He wasn't built for a name like that,
And it did not suit him well.
You might have called him Smith or Jones,
And not felt bad at that;
But to call him Reginald Archibald Prettyman
Makes you feel so flat.

Did you ever see a woman who has grown so fat
 She does not walk but floats;
With a forty-seven collar and a two-inch hat,
 And a waist like a bag of oats?
She cruises along in an armor-plated way
 Without a thought of shame;
And it makes you ill when you hear the people say,
 “Why, there goes What’s-Her-Name.”
For her name is Constance Daisy Willoughby,
 Why, I never could tell;
She wasn’t built for a name like that,
 And it does not suit her well.
You might have called her Smith or Jones,
 And not felt bad at that:
But to call her Constance Daisy Willoughby
 Makes you feel so flat.

Did you ever see a man with his legs so short,
He has not an inch to spare;
A roly-poly figure and a simple sort
Of half-done, childish air?
He may be small and of no account,
But he isn't all to blame,
And it's hard on him to carry around
A proud, historic name.
For his name is Caesar Bounaparte Hannibal,
Why, I never could tell;
He wasn't built for a name like that,
And it does not suit him well.
You might have called him Smith or Jones,
And not felt bad at that;
But to call him Caesar Bounaparte Hannibal
Makes you feel so flat.



THE STRANGER'S ERROR.

Of course, I hain't a-sayin'
That for preachin' and for prayin'
The camp at Eagle Corners is entitled to a prize;
But I says, and says emphatic,
That perliteness is our racket,
And the feller what denies it—well, them fellers mostly dies.

Now the styles and fashions changes
With the places where you ranges,
And the style of Rome or Paree ain't the Corners' style at all;
Just to hear the langwidge showed it,
And the stranger might hev' knowed it
'Fore he went a-learnin' manners to a man like Squint McCall.

Squint, he owned the Susan Smily,
Back of Dead Horse, him and Reilly,
And the stranger come to buy it, leastwise that was what was said;
For the stranger he kept quiet,
Didn't say so nor deny it
Till we come to meet him later, but by that time he was dead.

Mac of course explained it fairly;
Said he seldom, very rarely,
Had occasion to deprive a feller critter of his life;
But the thing that set him crazy
Was to hev' that two-bit daisy
Tellin' him it warn't proper to eat taters with his knife.

"There he sot," said Mac, a-fillin'
Of his pipe, "And I was willin'
To've accommodated of him to most anything he'd ask;
Special effort hed been makin',
There was extra beans and bacon,
And some long cut and some very extra whiskey in that flask.

But by gum! he wanted towels;
Said the whiskey hurt his bowels;
And he asked fer eggs, as though I'd go and git 'em off a goat.
And on what particular member
Jumped the beans I disremember,
But the 'baccy was a most eternal pisen to his throat.

And the bunk, it didn't fit him,
And the fleas or somethin' bit him;
And about the time he went to sleep I called him to git up:
And the mornin' air was chilly,
And the country was too hilly,
And the dinged old dog she bit his leg for foolin' with her pup.

So he constant kept on rilin'
Of my humor, and a-spilin'
My intentions till by supper I was snoopin' round fer strife;
And he said, 'Well, well, I never!
It is really deuced clever,
You are eatin' them pertaters and you're swallerin' your knife.'

Then I thought fer just a minit',
And the next—well, we was in it;
And if he'd had sand it might hev' bin the purtiest kind of fight;
And the cause of the incision
In the stranger, it is his'n,
Fer lackin' the first principles of how to be perlite."

Then us fellers got together,
And we argified it whether
There was any special question how the stranger went and died.
And it seemed O'Hara's motion
Kinder struck the general notion
That the stranger had been guilty of determined suicide.

OUR LADY OF DREAMS.

When the feast is resplendent and glowing,
With laughter and wit at their best,
And the warm southern vintages flowing
Unlock the best thoughts of the breast;
When come are the moments elysian,
And life like a fairy tale seems,
There enters a something—a vision—
A thought of "Our Lady of Dreams."

Her hair is done up in curl papers,
Her hands on the coverlid lie,
And you catch, by the light of the tapers,
The gleam of a threatening eye;
There's a calmness that will not dissemble
Where the night light burns constant and dim,
A cold, deadly calm—and you tremble,
For you know she is waiting for HIM.

You know she is waiting to ask him
The hour when he deigned to arrive;
With the stern, barren truth she will task him,
For she knows it is quarter-past five;
And she wishes to urge the suggestion
How such conduct to decent folk seems;
He's averse to discussing the question
Advanced by "Our Lady of Dreams."

She speaks not. He muses on whether
He'd feel quite as bad if she spoke;
And he tries to improve on the weather
By telling the latest new joke.
A something whose recent disclosure
Awoke the boys' laughter to screams;
It dies of indecent exposure
When told to "Our Lady of Dreams."

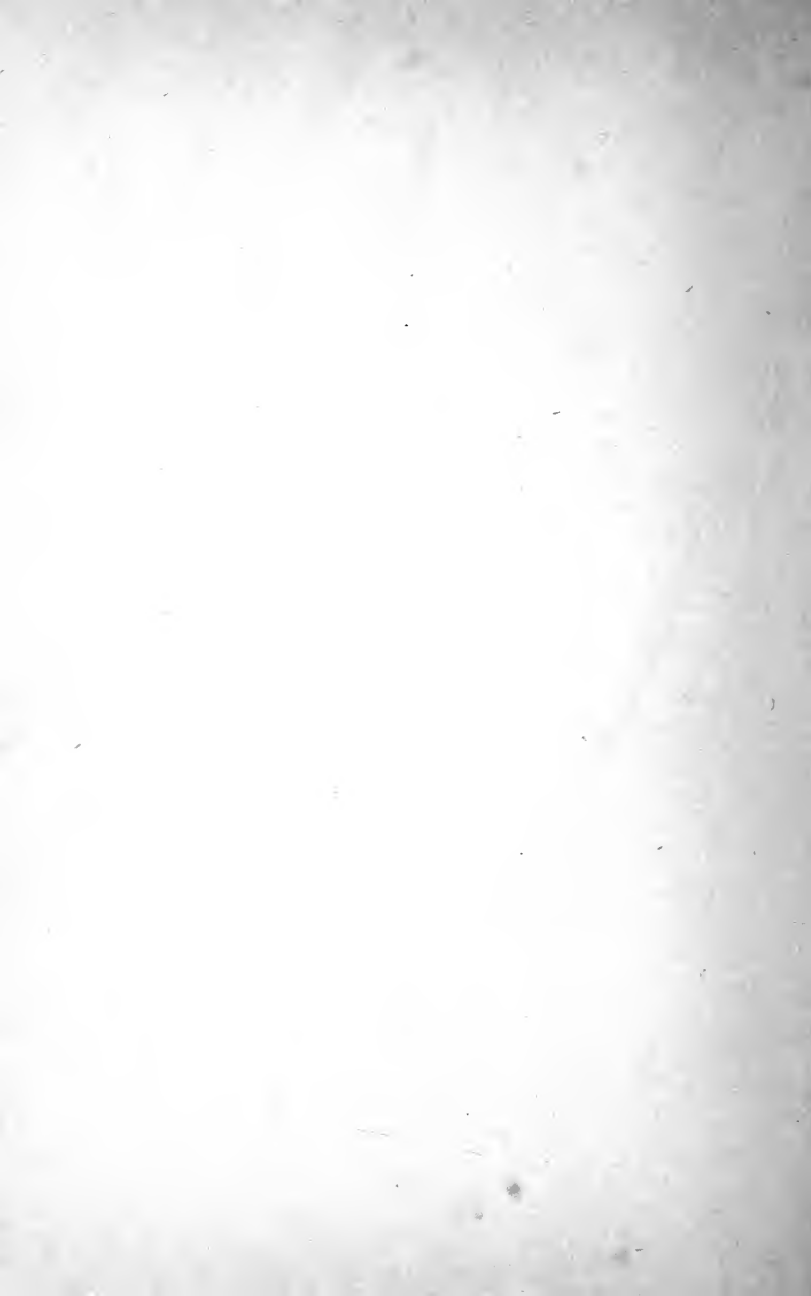
O Angel that's given to guide us
Adown the long pathway of life,
Remember the pleasure denied us,
We can't be a suffering wife.
And think, in the midst of your scorning,
In the midst of your innocent dreams,
O think of his head in the morning,
And pardon—"Our Lady of Dreams."



WILL IT SEEM LESS FAIR.

When the flesh falls from me and I am I,
With the wonderful spaces to wander through,
The dreams to dream and the deeds to do
 That may not or cannot be pictured here,
 Will the world, I wonder, appear less dear,
The little brown world that I one time knew?

When the great wide spaces are mine indeed,
With all of the glory that blossoms there,
The high, pure thoughts in the quiet air,
 And the spirit faces that glisten so,
 Will an earthly face that I used to know,
A wistful face—Will it seem less fair?



ALL IS WELL.

The salt waves, tireless, beat upon the sand
As beat the waves in ages long before;
The giant pines within the forest stand
Hushed with the memories of days of yore;
And, wiser with the knowledge born of years,
To the ephemeral race of men that dwell,
A moment's space, they bring a truce to tears,
Bearing the constant message, "All is well."

The wondrous planets, whiter than the dawn,
Swing through the universe; with patient gaze
They mark the new world clusters glowing born,
Or note a stricken world's expiring blaze.
And, to the ephemeral pine trees and the sea
That on the twinkling worlds a moment dwell,
They send their deep-toned notes of sympathy,
Bearing the constant message, "All is well."

O soul of man, that woke with the first pine!
Or listened first to the great ocean's roar!
What myriad lives between thy days and mine
'Neath that same pine or on that self-same shore!
Still down the corridors of time they fare,
That host, whose goal the silence will not tell;
Only from sea and shore, and outer air,
Is borne the constant message, "All is well."

TO MY WIFE.

The years are gliding by, Dear,
And you and I must wend
Our paths together now, Dear,
Together to the end;
And sweet it is to me to glance
Down these long years of life
And know that you will walk by me
Forever, My Dear Wife.

When youth's first strength I felt, Dear,
With all the world to face,
I dreamed of fame and name, Dear,
I thought of power and place;
But only one thought holds me now,
But one dream thrills me through,
A sweet and quiet home, My Love,
Where I can be with you.

I had no thought of God, Dear,
I did not care to know
What other worlds there were, Dear,
Where I might some day go;
But now I hope, and, hoping, feel
That through eternity,
In happy heavens that lie beyond
I still may walk with thee.

Then take these passing words, Dear,
As tribute from my heart;
They may be simple thoughts, Dear,
And told with little art;
But you have filled my barren life
With wealth it never knew,
And I would fain express, in turn,
The love I bear for you.

STEPHANIE.

“Come,” he remarked, “on Sunday next,
And spend the day and night with me;
It’s sweltering here, and wife will be
So pleased, and so will Stephanie.”

So I obeyed. And as I rode,
Hour after hour, in fancy free,
I mused on many things, but most
I mused on unknown Stephanie.

Light? Dark? I wonder. Light, I hope;
Eyes deep and tender as the sea;
Soft hands, small form in lawn enwrapt,
The guileless, lovely Stephanie.

To-night the moon will be at full:
I wonder now if, after tea,
We two will stroll in calm content
Together, I and Stephanie.

Soft will the air be, soft and calm:
Shadows will lie across the lea;
At peace all nature; and at peace
I with the witching Stephanie.

From the wide fields will float a haze;
The toads will chirp from tree to tree;
And all the air will ring with notes
Of crickets calling Stephanie.

The place at last! The hot train throbs;
I stroll the lane, the house I see,
And there mine host and family. Gods!
I will NOT stroll with Stephanie!

BABY OF MINE

What do you see with the big blue eyes,

Baby of mine, of mine?

Wonderful things in the wide blue skies,

Baby of mine, of mine.

Wonderful things when the sun is high,

And the day is warm, and the clouds float by,

And wonderful things when the swallows fly

And the long day slowly dies.

I wish I could see it again with you,

Baby of mine, of mine.

The long dear journey again go through,

Baby of mine, of mine.

That God could take me and lead again

That wonderful walk down the long, long lane,

From babyhood wonder through youth's dear plain,

To the fields of sober hue.

I envy you, baby, the way that lies,
 Baby of mine, of mine,
Under the blue of the beautiful skies,
 Baby of mine, of mine.
I envy you, baby; but it may be,
When free is the spirit and eyes can see,
A way more wonderful waits for me,
A way through paradise.

LOUISE.

Down by the shore where the willows grow,
In the spot we both have known,
I am sitting again in the sunset glow,
But alas! I am here alone;
The wild birds call to the nesting mate,
And the swallows wing them free,
And they tell of the days that are gone, My Love,
Of the days that are gone with thee.

Louise, Louise, the river still is flowing,
The sunlight's kiss is on the silent sea,
And every breeze across the meadow blowing
Repeats my cry, "Come back, come back to me."

Still is the wild-wood path the same,
Where my tale of love I told;
And across by the creek all the sumacs flame,
With the brave, gallant flame of old.
Dear Heart, I have wandered the wide world o'er,
And have learned all that life may be;
But again I have come to the old, old place,
And my cry is for love and thee.

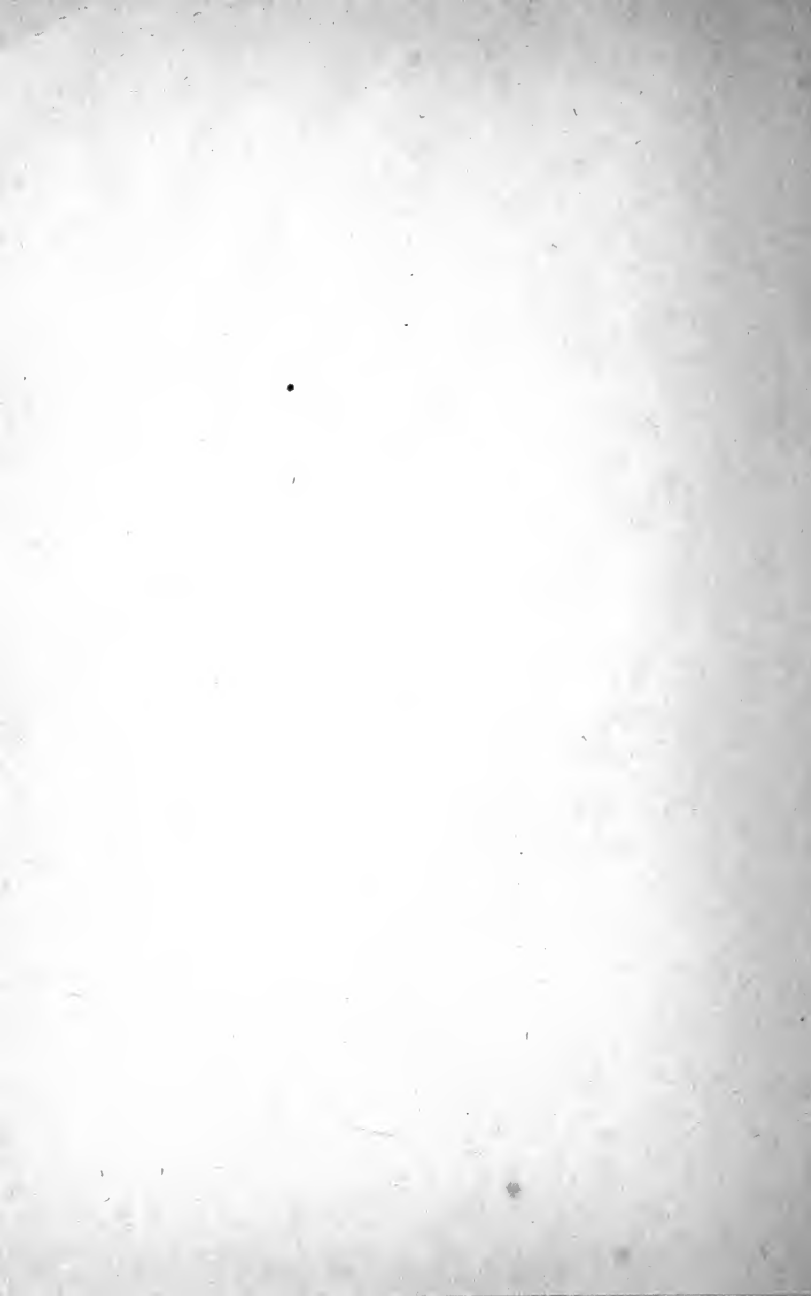
Louise, Louise, the river still is flowing,
The sunlight's kiss is on the silent sea;
And every breeze across the meadow blowing
Repeats my cry, "Come back, come back to me."

APOLOGY.

You ask me to pen you a rhyme,
But the fair fickle muse seems to shun me;
And when I would woo
With a long sigh or two,
She turns her pert back full upon me.

I sigh for a day or two more,
And then I go smiling and singing,
Forgetting the elf;
When behold her sweet self
Is beside me, all tearful and clinging.

So mistress, believe when I say
I would gladly comply with your tasking;
But I know, if I do,
I shall lose my dear shrew,
And you will gain naught by the asking.

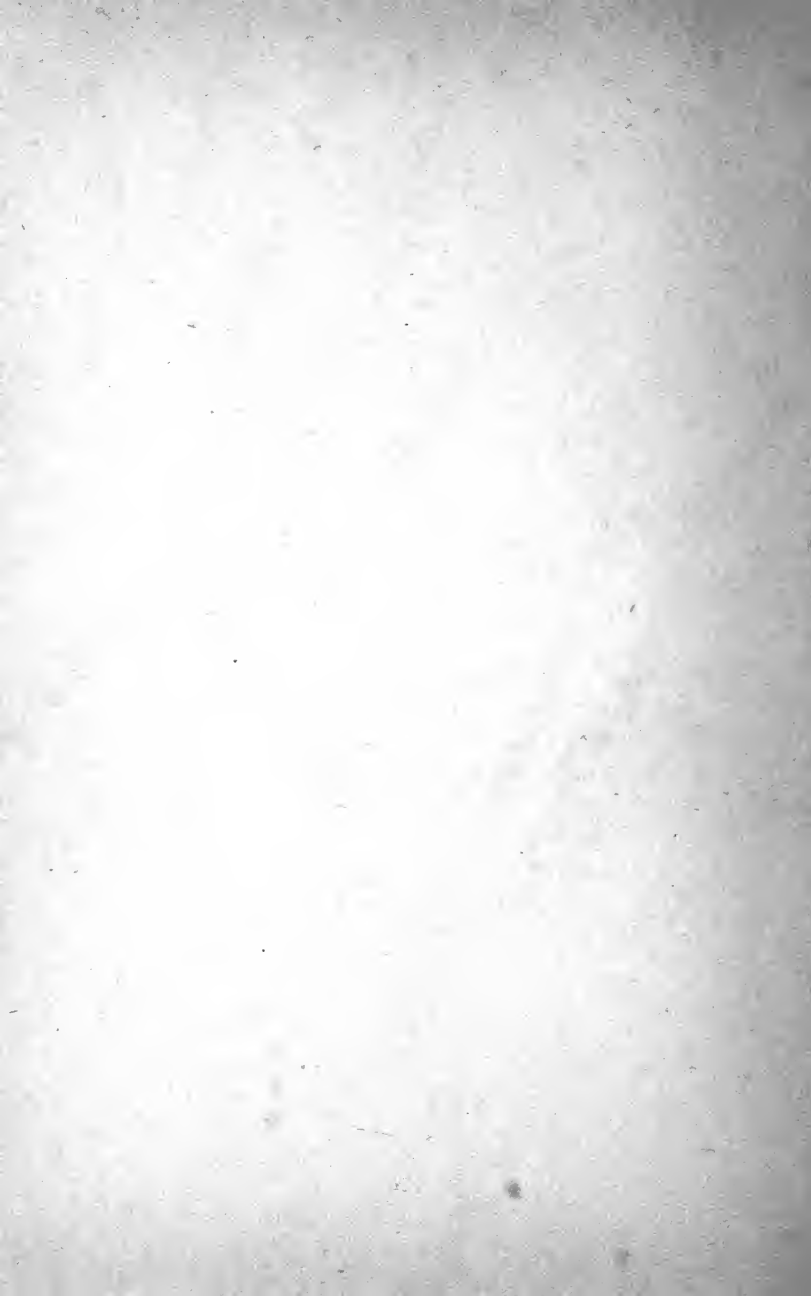


TO A FRIEND.

The winged steed, perchance you know,
 Bends not to bridle, rein or bit;
But wanders, uncontrolled, where grow
 The flowers of beauty, grace and wit.

So, in the fields of common talk
 That round my daily pathway lie,
He enters not, and I must walk
 Along with sombre company.

Till, on a sudden day of grace,
 Beside my path good friends appear,
With wit to beautify the place;
 And, lo! the fabled steed is here.



TO YOSEMITE.

The silence of the centuries!

The calm where doubtings cease!
And over all the brooding of God's presence,
And the spell of perfect peace.

O Granite Cliffs that steadfast face the dawn!

O Forest Kings that heard Creation's sigh!
Teach me thy simple creed, that, living, I
May live like thee, and as serenely die.

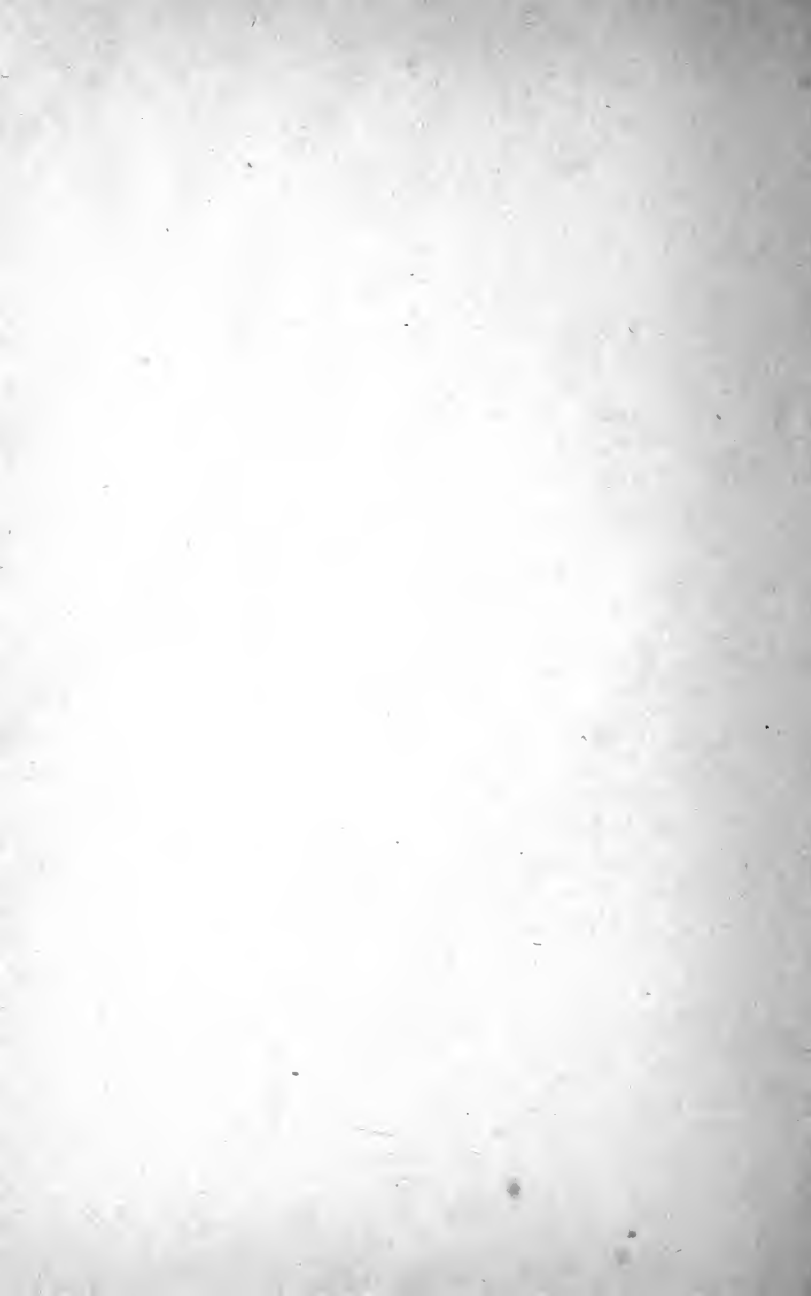


EVENING SOLILOQUY.

Cloud mass on cloud aspiring,
Besiege the darkening dome;
On broad wings wafting, tiring,
The sea-birds wend them home,
In rhythmic, solemn motion,
While the last sunset ray
Flings out, to earth and ocean,
The farewell of the day.
And, by the salt waves leaping
In pulsing, endless quest,
My idle vigil keeping,
Alone with my unrest,
In dimming light I ponder
On crimson cloud and sky,
And send my soul to wander
In fancy, as would I,
Where all is gold and glory,
And all is sought and won,

Where told is all the story
And all the toil is done;
And gone is all the weeping,
The fretting and the fears,
The gleaning and the reaping,
The laughter and the tears;
For just beyond the veiling
Of crimson cloud and sky,
In calm that knows no wailing
The happy Islands lie.
Ah, here is no endeavor,
And here is no emprise;
The storm winds beat it never,
The glad sun never dies;
The dread years never bringing
The burden of regret;
Dead sorrows never clinging
To days we would forget;

Nor fear of all the morrows
Nor any sombre dawn;
Confronting formless sorrows,
With faces worn and wan.
But, as with purpose single,
The river seeks the sea,
My life with love shall mingle
And all be all in me;
All peace and pleasure blending
In one completed one;
Through years that swing unending,
Beneath an endless sun.



A LEGEND.

(Lines written on the marriage of the daughter of a friend.)

The legends say, a knight once passed
Amidst the ruins of the vast,
Dead cities, where had once been set
The thrones of kings whom men forget;
On the huge mounds, where empires sleep,
The simple shepherd fed his sheep,
And in the halls, where kings held sway,
The Arab children were at play;
Menes and Pharoah, names sublime,
Whose sceptres sunk to conquering time,
Till now were left, to mark their fall,
A few crude pictures on a wall.
"Father," he cried, "and is there then
No king immortal among men?
No Sovereign Lord, whose pomp and power
Shall mock at time and spurn the hour?
Such would I choose my Lord to be,
To such alone would bend the knee."

Then said the aged sage and kind,
"That Lord exists, ride forth and find."
Then forth he rode, on questing bound,
And ever sought, but never found,
Until, one day, upon an hour,
Seeking repose within the bower
Of the dear lady he loved best,
He told her of his hopeless quest.
She heard and turned her face away,
Dreaming in far-off, gentle way,
And then made answer, smiling bright,
"Quest easy to achieve, Sir Knight."
"Easy," he cried, "then do you know
The Lord for whom I wander so?"
When, on a sudden, as the flame
Bursts in the tinder, answer came,
For, looking in her eyes of blue,
He saw Love throned there—and he knew.

So, Lady Fair, whose life crossed mine
So brief a space beneath the pine,
To-day the orange blossoms prove
You, too, a subject of King Love—
A member of a court whose sway
Began upon earth's natal day,
And will endure, 'neath every sun,
Till the creation's race is run.
Be not afraid, though mighty, he
Is gentle as a child should be;
And though so powerful, there lies
The softest light within his eyes,
Until you cross him, Lady Fair,
But when you do, beware, beware!
Then let me, as an offering,
Upon this day this legend bring;
And as the bards, in olden days,
Lightened the feasting with their lays,

Such custom may this bard renew
And raise this song to Love and you:

SONG.

In the blue of her eyes and the light of her smile
Is a power that will fade from us never;
Gone, gone are the kingdoms of Greece and the Nile,
But the kingdom of Love is forever.

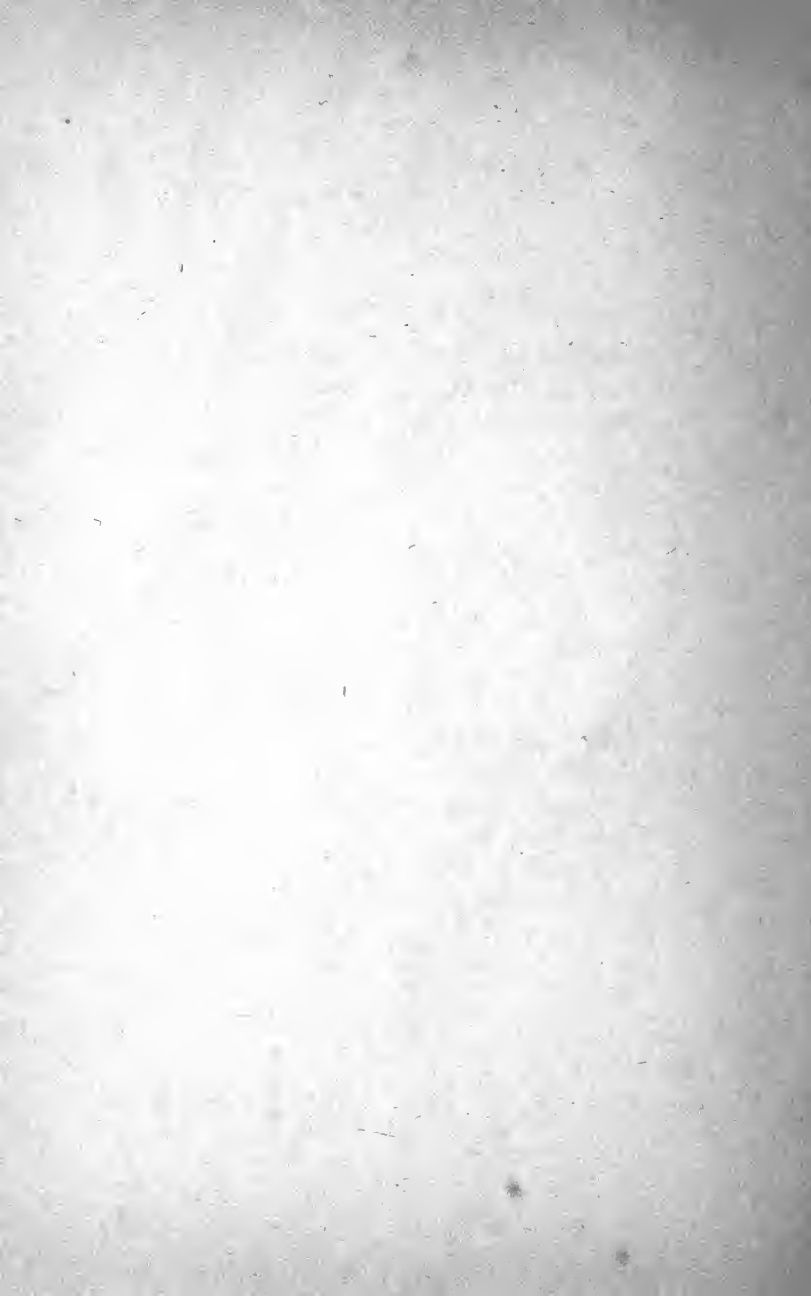
To kings some may bow, some be subject to none,
The custom is much as we make it;
But how we all hasten to bow to the one,
The yoke of this king, who would shake it?

Full happy the lot which your future shall bring:
May your burden of care be the lightest:
And you at the court of our Master and King
Among the bright Fair be the brightest.

SERENADE

Deep in the shadows my boat I leave,
Where the willow boughs hang over;
Tangled grass of the fields I cleave,
To the home—the home of my lover;
There where the flowers in the garden blow,
All the warm night air perfuming,
There waits the girl of my heart, I know,
For the bliss of our sweet communing.

Sweet is the greeting the roses fling
To the skies that bend above them;
Sweet is the message the breezes bring
To the flowers, the flowers that love them;
Sweet are the notes of the wild bird's call
To its mate the forest over;
Dearer and sweeter and best of all
Is the kiss, is the kiss of my lover.



ONCE ON A TIME.

Once on a time I saw a rosebud growing,
Upon a bush within a garden fair,
While all around it tender buds were blowing,
And gentle breezes passed and kissed it there;
But still it gave no heed upon its stem,
Nor ope'd its heart, nor listened aught to them,
Until a wandering sunbeam, passing by,
Approached and kissed it long and tenderly;
And then the rose awoke to life and bloom,
Awoke to sweetest beauty and perfume,
And, on the breeze about the garden winging,
I seemed to hear the echo of this singing;
" 'Tis the sun, tis' the sun that is master of all,
When life to fruition is swelling,
'Tis the sun, 'tis the sun that awakes with a call
That is dulcet and dear yet compelling;
'Tis the sun, 'tis the sun that must ever disclose
Life's joys to the buds that are tender,
And the heart of the virgin and blossoming rose
Yields once in a gentle surrender."

Once on a time I saw a maiden straying
The peaceful pathway of her life along,
While all about were youthful fancies playing,
And in the sunlight whispered love's sweet song;
But still she gave no heed upon her way,
Nor cared for ought the songs of love might say,
Until her own dear lover, passing by,
Approached and kissed her long and tenderly;
And then the maid awoke to life and song,
Awoke to beauty all the dear day long,
And, in the breeze about her pathway winging,
I seemed to hear the echo of this singing;
"It is love, it is love that is master of all,
When life to fruition is swelling,
It is love, it is love that awakes with a call
That is dulcet and dear yet compelling;
It is love, it is love that must ever disclose
The exquisite dreams and the tender,
And the heart of the maid, like the heart of the rose,
Yields once in a gentle surrender."

SANTA CLAUS' LAMENT.

Once, when very far from home,
On some business, I'll not mention,
Wandering where white bears roam,
Bears with not the best intention;
Lo! I saw a house before me,
Queer old house with peak and gable,
And a sudden thought came o'er me,
"I will enter if I'm able."
Queer old door I passed me by it,
Queer old rooms with queer old ceilings,
And I tip-toed, silent, quiet,
And I had such queer old feelings;
Never was another mansion
Built like this one, I am certain;
'Twas a place of large expansion,
At each door a great white curtain
Hid the rooms beyond extended,
Rooms from which no echo sounded;
No voice or foot-fall blended
With the silence which surrounded,

All the walls, which sparkled whitely,
Sprays of evergreen adorning
Made it seem like Xmas rightly,
Very early Xmas morning,
Just before the fires are lighted,
When the cold is something shocking,
And half frozen, half affrighted
You get up to hunt your stocking.
And, what aided the illusion,
Over all the place were lying
Heaps of toys in wild confusion,
Heaps, it really was most trying;
There were guns, and dolls, and dragons,
Kites, and bears with keys to wind them,
Drums, and whips, and long red wagons,
Sheep that had their tails behind them,
Marbles, tops, and lovely houses
Filled with furniture and dishes,
Soldier men in bright red blouses,
Little ponds with ducks and fishes,

Animals, that when you wanted,
Moved their heads and started bleating,
Chinese gods that all seemed haunted
By the fate of over-eating;
Noah's arks, with all the people
Very stiff and most unsteady,
One church with a tall sharp steeple,
Barnyards, with the wagons ready.
As I stood there thus astounded,
All about me peering, prying,
From a room adjacent sounded
All at once a noise of crying;
And astonishment came o'er me
And I said "It's very certain
Someone else is here before me
In that room behind that curtain."
So I went and peered, and peering,
Very, very quiet keeping,
Saw an aged man appearing
Seated by a table weeping;

He was plump, and round, and hearty,
With white hair and beard befitting,
And this aged stricken party
In a large white chair was sitting.
"Sir," said I, at once addressing
With respect, and bowing lowly,
"Why this grief so deep distressing?"
Then he raised his head up, slowly
Spoke and said: "For years unnumbered,
All the great, great, wide world over,
While the little children slumbered,
Have I wandered as a rover
Bringing toys, and games and candy,
To the little children sleeping;
Filling stockings hanging handy,
Loading trees when no one's peeping.
Very early, Xmas morning,
You can hear my horn a-blowing;
Hear my sleigh-bells ringing warning,
See me, too, if it's not snowing.

But, although I travel yearly,
All the great big, round world over,
And I love the children dearly.
Not a child can I discover,
Who has ever thought to send me
Toy or game, or greeting kindly:
Do you wonder they offend me,
Or that I am weeping blindly?
Year by year, experience scorning,
At the grate I've hung my stocking,
But it's empty Xmas morning."
Said I, "Santa, this is shocking;
I am sure there's no intention
Mongst the children to neglect you!
If you only would make mention
Of the hour when they'd expect you,
They'd be up and waiting surely
With a very hearty greeting."
But he shook his head demurely,
Said: "I do not want a meeting;

What I want is to be sleeping
All night long, and, just at morning,
Climb out softly and go creeping
To the mantel, without warning,
Find my stocking brimming over
Hanging by the mantel handy,
Then creep back beneath the cover,
Count the toys and eat the candy;
This is what I've been expecting
But the children all forget me."
And I said, "This needs correcting:
I will aid you if you'll let me."
"Yes," said he, "Upon returning,
Pray make mention of my wishes,
Tell them how my soul is yearning
For a drum or bright red dishes;
For a gun, or belt and sabre,
Or a lovely candy woman
With a candy man as neighbor,
Painted to look almost human;

Tell them such a gift will teach me
They are thinking of me kindly;
By express or mail 'twill reach me,
Santa Claus, North Pole, will find me."
Thus he spake, and speaking slowly,
Quite unlooked-for and unaided
From before my eyes, he wholly
And he most completely faded:
And I looked about uncertain,
In a way confused, surprising,
Till I saw my bed-room curtain,
And the morning sun arising.



ENVOY.

Ye songs are sung, and round about
The people crowd beside me;
Some few indeed give praises out,
Ye balance, they deride me.

I cannot say that I am blest
By critic, rude or proper,
But will remark that I'll be blest
If I give ought a copper,

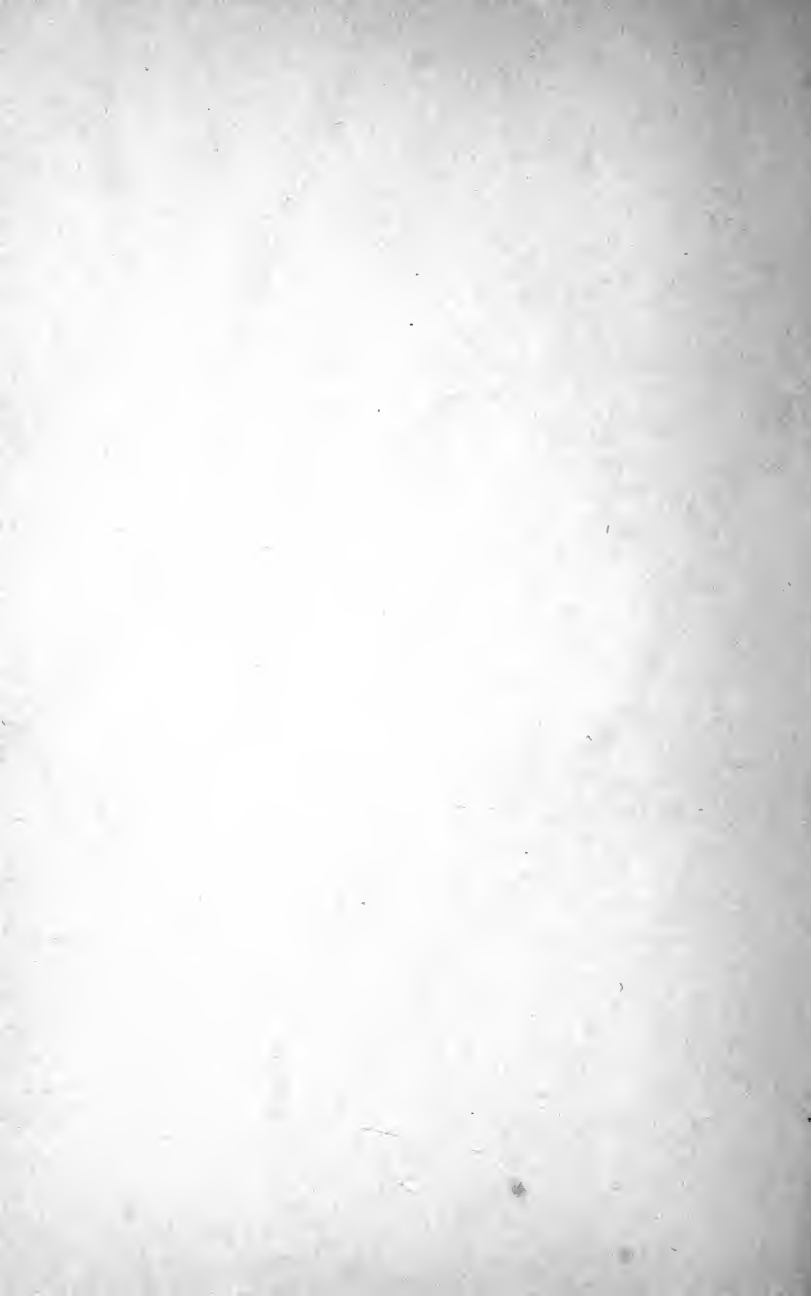
For any critique, bad or good,
Or scanty praise or plenty,
If only I have hit the mood
Of young miss sweet and twenty.



YEARNING.

There is a voice I almost hear
Of one forever at my side ;
A voice that fain would speak to me,
And tell me all I wish to know ;
How spring the flowers, why grasses grow ;
What means the tossing of the sea
And what the wide world's mystery ;
And I—I know the words are clear ;
But Oh, alas, I cannot hear.

There is a land, I know, that lies
Where not a boundary is set.
A land serene, and Oh, so fair,
Where clouds of doubt no longer roll
To dim the sky and fright the soul ;
And all I love are waiting there
Transfigured in the sinless air ;
And I—I know they signal me ;
But Oh, alas, I cannot see.



KING'S SONG.

My daughter, you are going to leave your pa;
At least I am assuming that you are.

For, if you propose to live
With your daddy, I will give
A tip that you have missed your car.
For it breaks my heart with you to part,
And to walk my way alone.
But don't hesitate to go, for I think you know
I have troubles enough of my own.

If this thing is your husband that's to be,
I wouldn't give a blessed sou marquee,
For a dozen of his kind,
Though it's well to bear in mind
That he perhaps may useful be;
For when you go to your home, you know,
You won't forget your dad;
And you'll say with regret, "There are others yet,
And the old man's not so bad."

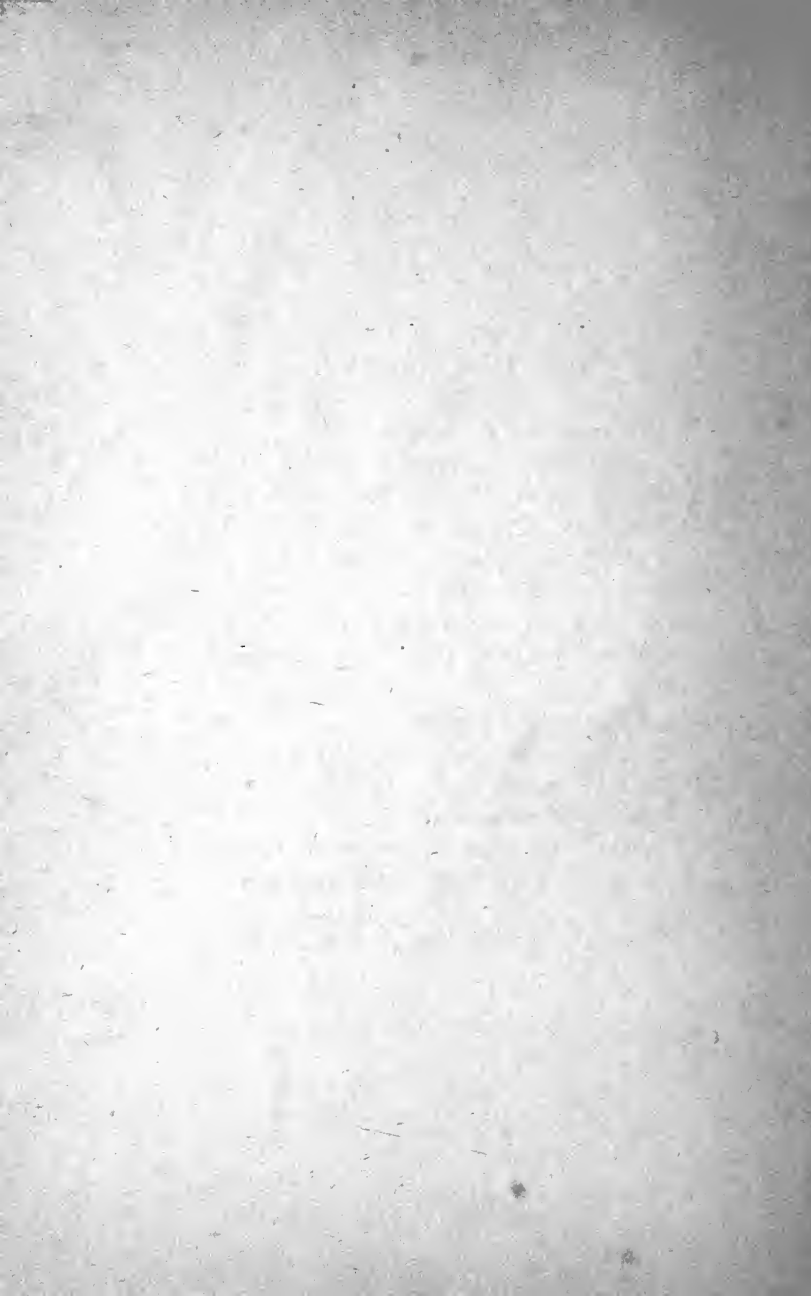
Young man that is or used to be,
I give to you my blessing, it is free;
 You'll need it, by and by,
 But I needn't tell you why,
For I'm married, and look at me.
And a bird will sing of love in the spring
 From the top of a sycamore tree;
And you'll turn your eyes on your love with surprise,
 And you'll wish that bird to be.

For love makes you feel like a bird, so I've heard,
 At least so the poets say;
And though the fowl be a gander or an owl,
 It works just the same that way.

KING'S PREROGATIVE.

Oh what a snap is a prerogative!
It beats most any old thing;
Nothing about it that's derogative
To the position of a King.
For a Senator may break loose some day,
Or a President come it rather strong;
But the King's all right, if he gets tight,
For the King can do no wrong.

You ought to see me when I'm wearing it
Right side up with care;
You'd be so impressed, I'm swearing it,
You'd go crazy then and there.
For that sort of thing just fits a King,
And no one else, you see;
So by day or night the King's all right,
And the King, you know, means me.



LOVE, THY PINIONS.

Love, thy pinions are as light as air,
Flying from the dear one, far away;
Swift thou speedest from the silent prayer,
Swift from voice that bids thee stay.
But when lover's heart to heart is crying,
O'er the parting earth and o'er the sea,
Love, oh, Love, how leaden is thy flying,
There is none with wing as slow as thee.

Love, thy fancy is as light as air,
Straying as the wanton breezes stray;
None can catch and bind or hold thee there,
None by pleading prayer can bid thee stay.
But when lover's heart would cease its yearning,
Turned to other fonder hearts that be,
Love, oh, Love, how quick is thy returning,
There is none with wing as swift as thee.



I WOULDN'T MIND A LITTLE THING LIKE THAT

When you've got a rooted sorrow that is gnawing at your core,
And it seems that life will never smile again;
When your eyes with tears are blinded and your heart with
grief is sore,
And your days and nights are filled with woe and pain;
It is such a soothing solace when a friend of other days,
A happy friend, round, jolly, gay and fat,
Comes up and listens calmly to your tale of woe and says,
"I wouldn't mind a little thing like that."

It was only in last August that I backed the losing team,
And I played the slot machines without a pair;
And I spoke the name of Stella in a quiet little dream,
And awoke with fingers fastened in my hair.
I told a friend about it, and he said, in mild surprise,
"I wouldn't"—but I seized a handy bat,
And brained him, and I whispered as I closed his dying eyes,
"I wouldn't mind a little thing like that."

I can bear it like a stoic when another fellow dies,
And I don't take on so badly when he's ill;
And if ill-luck comes upon him I can say, "Oh, blast my eyes,"
But I really do not say it with a will.
All such troubles are but trifles, simply trifles light as air;
And I cannot see a thing to grumble at;
I can say and just observe with what a calm, superior air,
"I wouldn't mind a little thing like that."

SONG.

(Princess and Lord Chamberlain)

- P. I am going to mate and marry ere this happy day is done.
- L. C. But you're not going to mate and marry me.
- P. There are husbands here in plenty, and I purpose to have one.
- L. C. Excuse me; I'm off to climb a tree.
- P. It would seem that any daughter of a kingly race had oughter
Find a husband to her fancy if she'd only make a try.
- L. C. Though your grammar is defective, you've a power of invective
That is marvelous, and therefore I confess that I feel shy.

Chorus—For he won't marry, though she would so,
And she says "Yes" while he says "No";
And it's hard to arrange the thing, you know,
When the maid is willing, but the man is slow.

P. O'er my Love I'll cling and clamber, like an ivy
on a wall.

L. C. But you'll not cling and clamber over me.

P. And it doesn't really matter who my love may
be at all.

L.C. I must mention my affections are not free.

P. It is really quite confusing, when it comes to pick
and choosing;

Mongst so many, it is difficult to know the best and
worst.

L. C. If you'll only make no mention of your desperate
intention,

You are bound to catch a husband, if he doesn't
see you first.

Chorus—For he won't marry, though she would so,
And she says "Yes" while he says "No;"
And it's hard to arrange the thing, you know,
When the maid is willing, but the man is slow.



ECHO SONG.

Echo! Echo!

Fly away and speed them,
Friends of mine who dwell afar;

Echo! Echo!

Tell them that I need them,
Summon them in haste to war;
Fly down the valley where the wild vines grow,
Clamber up the mountain side,
Spread the message that my warriors know,
Spread the message far and wide.

Halloo! Halloo!

Halloo! Halloo!

(Voices faintly from rear answer)

Halloo! Halloo!

Halloo! Halloo!

Echo! Echo!

Set the woods a-singing,
Let them have my meaning clear;
Echo! Echo!

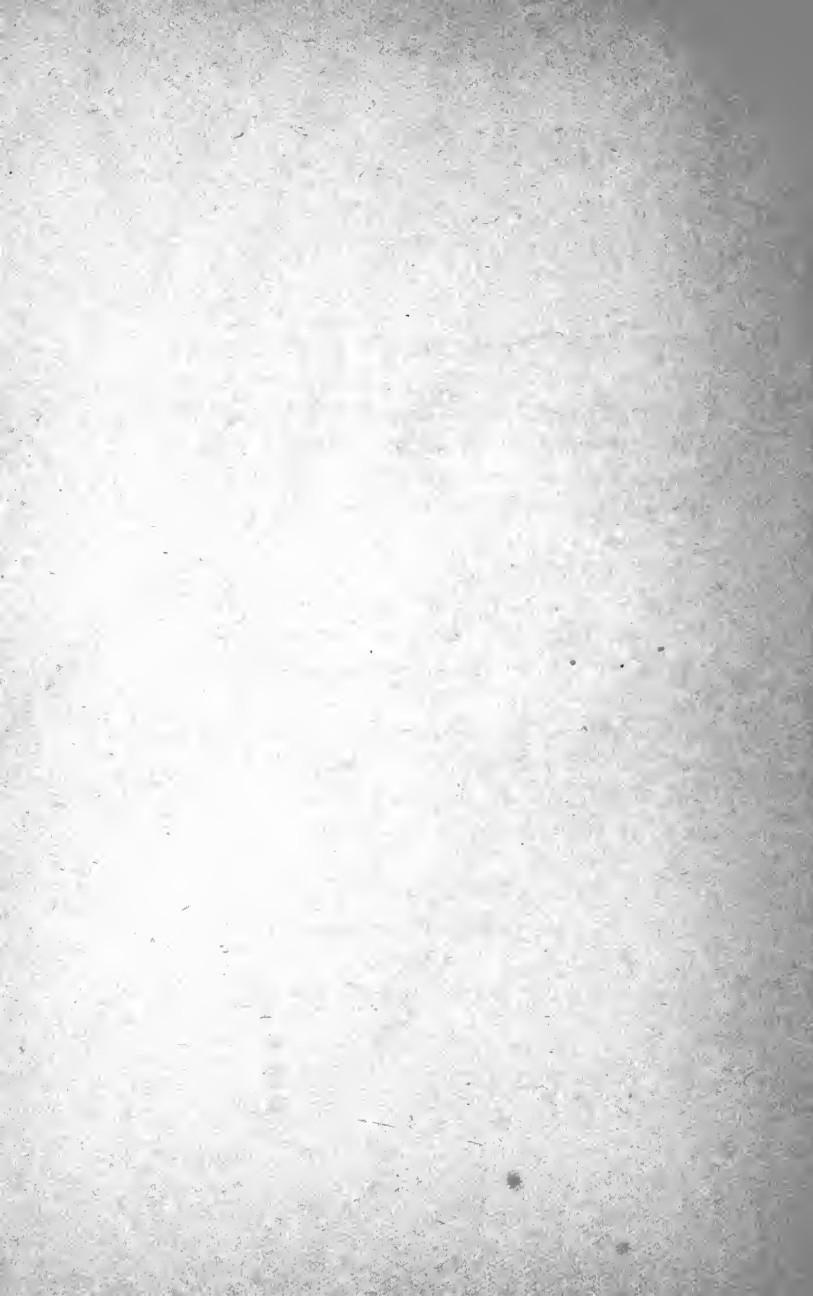
From the rocks a-ringing,
Sound me the message far and near.
Search in the shallows where the warm waves flow,
Call in the fishers from the tide;
Spread the message that my warriors know,
Spread the message far and wide.
Halloo! Halloo!
Halloo! Halloo!
(Voices from without)
Halloo! Halloo!
Halloo! Halloo!

AT LAST, DEAR HEART.

At last, Dear Heart, our ways so long divided
Have met and joined and will not part again;
The future has its story full provided;
Will it be told with pleasure or with pain?
With you my lot is now forever mingled,
With you my life and fate forever rest,
Joy, hopes and fears forever are commingled.
Ah, tell me Darling, tell me, is it best?

I would not change it now whate'er betide me;
Let life hereafter bring us joy or woe,
I rest content in that thou art beside me,
Where'er the pathway leads me I will go.
So take me, Love, nor dream of my denying;
Whate'er I have, whate'er I am is thine;
Upon thy love and constancy relying,
To thee I make the sacrifice divine.

Oh, Power Unseen that draws the future o'er us,
How bright or dark your offerings may be,
May the united path that lies before us
Divide no more through all eternity.



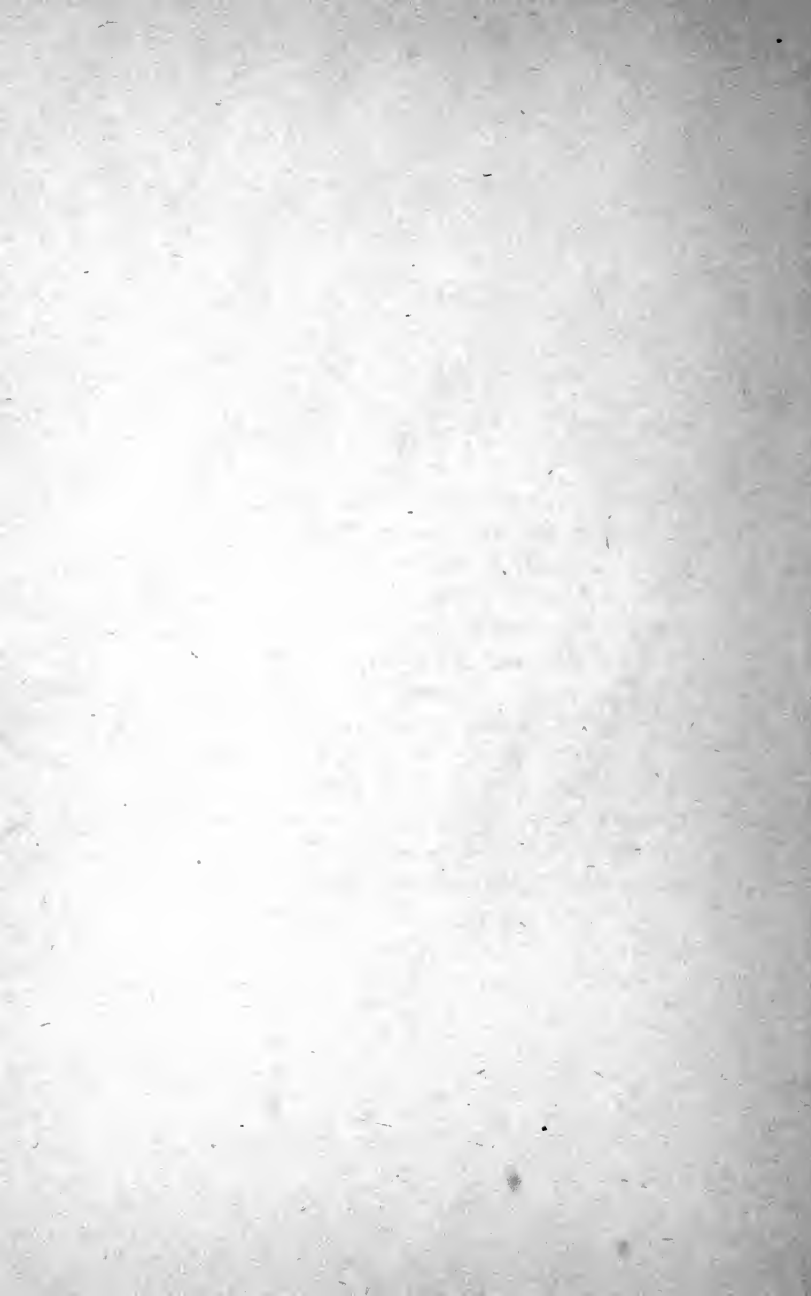
MORNING SONG.

Far over the mountain the sunlight is breaking;
Wide over the ocean the day is awaking;
Deep into the west the grim shadows go flying;
Day has returned and the darkness is dying.

Fade away, fade away,
Fade away night from the heavens above us;
Welcome day, welcome day,
Welcome the day and the sunbeams that love us.

Fresh, fresh from the sea the first breeze is upspringing;
Wide, wide through the forest the birds are all winging;
Deep, deep in the shadow the fishers go sailing;
Praise we and greet the glad morning with hailing.

Fade away, fade away,
Fade away night from the heavens above us;
Welcome day, welcome day,
Welcome the day and the sunbeams that love us.



SONG OF THE ISLAND MAIDEN.

Should you wonder, should you ponder,
As you sit and muse the while,
What the maid is, whether staid is,
In this sunny southern isle;
Should you question the suggestion
That like other girls is she,
And assever she is never
Coy, I'd answer, "Well, may be."

It may be, but we doubt it, yes we doubt it, oh,
We hardly would believe it, if you told us so;
For temperate or tropic it's the same, you know,
And women are but women, wheresoe'er you go.

Though possessing taste in dressing
That is scant, we must but own,
And with fancies in our dances
To a temperate clime unknown,
The diverting sport of flirting
Is not all a mystery;
Don't deny it, simply try it.
Are we artless? Well, may be.

It may be, but we doubt it, yes we doubt it, oh,
We hardly would believe it, if you told us so;
For temperate or tropic it's the same, you know,
And women are but women, wheresoe'er you go.

I'M SUCH A PECULIAR PERSON.

I'm such a peculiar person,
 Nobody's quite like me;
I'm a remarkable, odd individual,
 Yes, to a high degree.
I have unusual thoughts and views,
 Wonderful, I declare;
Such eccentricity makes me undoubtedly
 Something extremely rare.

Nobody thinks as I do,
 Nobody thinks so quite;
I have remarkable thoughts all day,
 Singular dreams at night;
All of my innermost attributes are
 Out of the common run;
Midst an unusually commonplace populace
 I'm an exceptional one.



THERE'S A LITTLE SLIGHT OBJECTION.

(Sung to Island Maidens who propose to marry a married man)

There's a little slight objection to the plan that you propose,
Though we do not doubt your excellent intention;
A trifling, simple obstacle that seems to interpose,
Which perhaps you will excuse me if I mention.
In social customs hereabouts of course you are au fait,
But you haven't, no you've not the faintest notion
Of the singular, I might say, of the very narrow way
They view things on the other side the ocean.

There's a little bit of cottage in a quiet little street,
In a little bit of country not as this is;
And, if you should chance to call there, you would very likely meet
A little bit of person labeled Mrs. ;
She is not very muscular, and isn't very stout,
And she has a most deceptive, quiet smile, and
If she should chance to hear you or to know what you're about,
'Twould be extremely crowded in this island.

There's a little bit of prejudice I really can't explain,
For facts, not explanations, I am giving,
Against a man who marries once and tries it on again
While Mrs. No. One is still a-living.
There's a little bit of building with a little bit of wall,
Where if he should chance to go you couldn't lose him;
But the board and room they furnish doesn't suit one's taste at all,
So I think, my dears, you really must excuse him.

THE DICKY BIRD.

When I was a child of scarcely three,
The pink of fresh simplicity,
I used to long, in a large degree,
For a robin perched in an apple tree;
And my parents said, fond parents they,
With a manner debonnaire and gay:
“Put salt on its tail, it’s the only way,
And you’ll catch the dicky bird some day.”

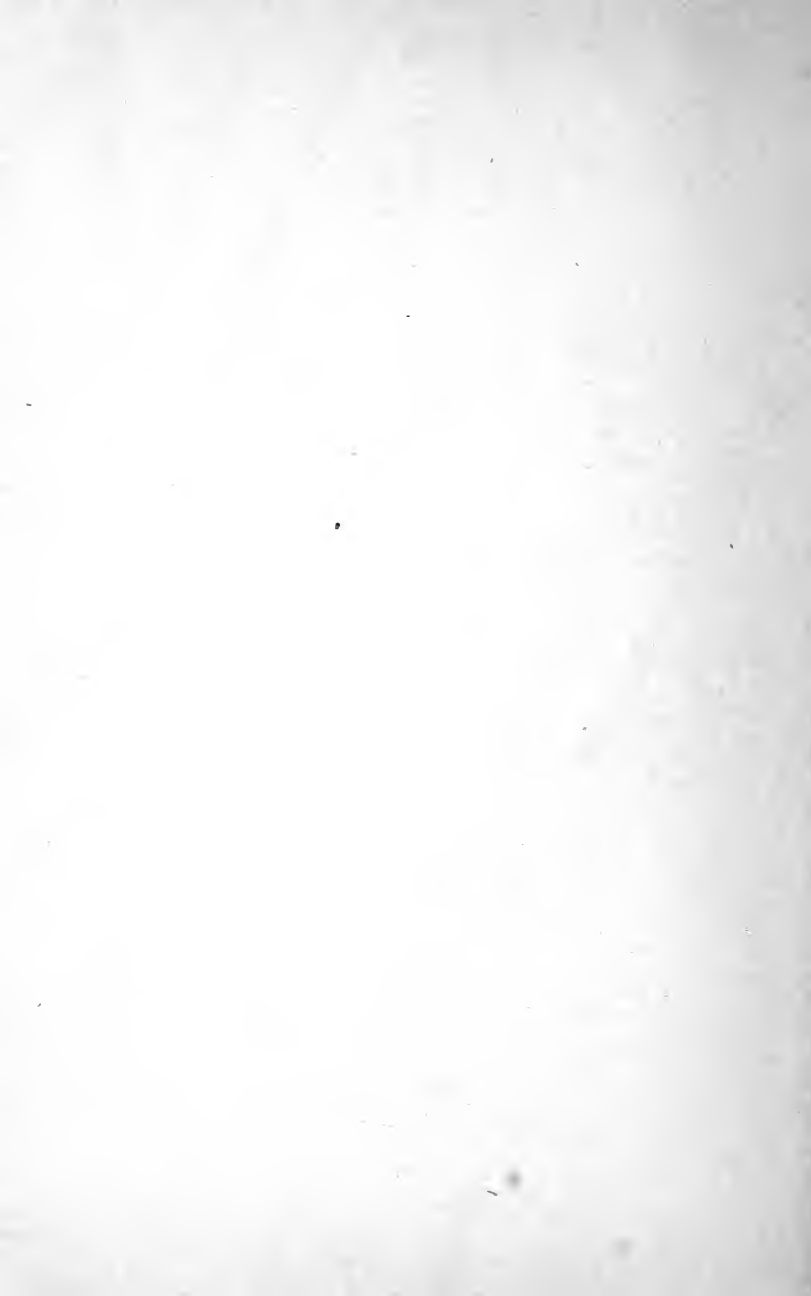
Now I blush to confess that I wasted a pound
Of salt in chasing that bird around,
And finally learned what I’ll be bound
Some other folks here have also found.
To my parents straight I told my tale,
And loudly I raised my infant wail.
“You can’t do anything else but fail,
For you can’t put salt on a dicky bird’s tail.”

I am older now by many a year,
But sometimes think, with a feeling queer,
I may have cause to pause and fear
I have not yet learned that lesson clear.
And I know, from all I've seen and heard,
I'm not the only one absurd;
But all the world like me, in a word,
Is engaged in chasing the dicky bird.

THE YOUNG MAN.

My mother said, when I left home,
As mothers very often do,
“My son, you’re starting forth to roam,
And I’ve confidence in you.”
So I went forth gay as a butterfly in May,
And I said, quite joyfully:
“I will conquer the world, at my feet it shall be hurled”—
And “they didn’t do a thing” to me!

It is a truly pleasant sight,
And one you may have seen,
When a young man goes the world to fight—
A young man fresh and green;
There’s a gleam in his eye, but ’twill flicker by and by,
And grow exceeding dim;
They are waiting in a row, all the world that loves him so—
And “they’ll never do a thing” to him!



LEGISLATION.

If you find things growing stupid and your life becoming dull,
You must not get discouraged at the fact;
You can easily correct it if you've any sort of pull;
Just go to work and pass a little Act;
It doesn't really matter if the thing is plain or not,
Or the law says very clearly "Yes" or "No;"
You needn't care for trifles such as that, why, not a jot;
Just wind the thing up tight and let her go.
For there's fun, oh, yes, there's fun in legislation;
You really can't conceive it till you try;
You must only treat the matter in the proper kind of manner,
And won't you have excitement—well, oh, my!

I have been among the animals at Barnum's, once or twice,
And with my umbrella poked the bear;
And the interest I've awakened, well you might describe as nice,
But with legislative fun it can't compare.
You only need to take a bit of paper and a pen,
And write some lines, just six or eight, no more;
And get the boys to stand behind and push it hard, and then
You'll hear the folks get up and let a roar.
For there's fun, oh, yes, there's fun in legislation;
You really can't conceive it till you try;
You must only treat the matter in the proper kind of manner,
And won't you have excitement—well, oh, my!

COME, WILL YOU WED WITH ME?

Duo—Dick and Wainui.

(This is sung and danced. She first retreating, and he following. (Second verse) He retreating and she following.)

Dick: Come, will you wed with me?

Wainui: No, sir, not as soon as this.

Dick: Will you my loved one be?

Wainui: That, I fear, would be amiss.

Dick: I cannot live alone.

Wainui: You have done so till to-day.

Dick: I will be true, My Own.

Wainui: That is what all lovers say.

(Wainui sings alone):

Vows declared while love is burning
Are not vows when love is turning;
Haste away with all your yearning,
I still answer, "Nay, nay, nay."

Dick: Faith, then, I'll leave you, Dear.
Wainui, No, Sir, not as soon as this.
Dick: You do not love, 'tis clear.
Wainui: You, I fear, my meaning miss.
Dick: I go to live alone.
Wainui: No, you shall not from to-day.
Dick: So fare you well, My Own.
Wainui: That is not what lovers say.

(Wainui sings alone):

Vows declared while love is leading
Are the only vows worth heeding,
So if you'll renew your pleading
I will answer "Yea, yea, yea."

YOU'RE IT.

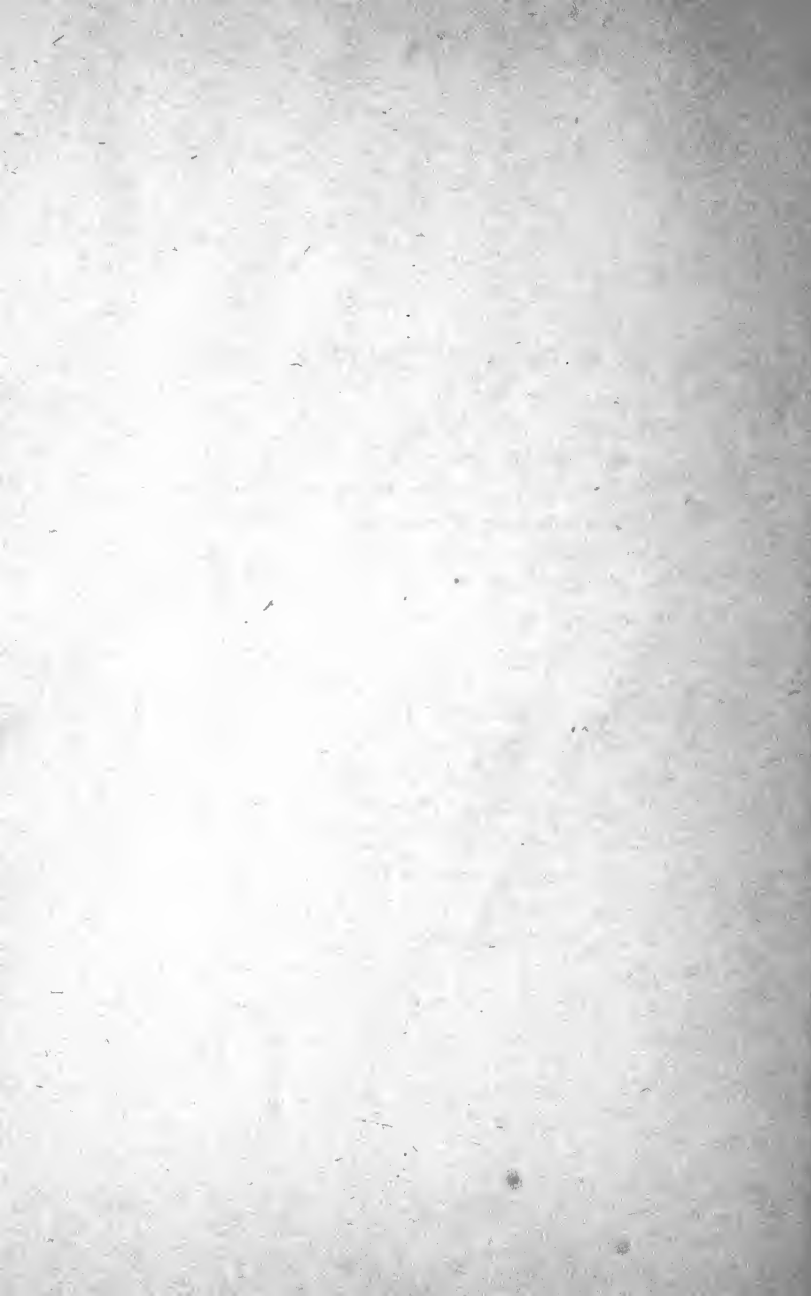
In the days of early boyhood, when all rosy was Life's sun,
When many were the joys and few the labors,
On summer afternoons when school was over, oh, what fun
To frolic with the youthful friends and neighbors.
You stood in line together barefoot, freckle-faced and red,
While one among you mystic words repeated;
When all at once he pointed at you suddenly and said
What all the rest, with joyous shouting, greeted:
 "You're it, you're it,"
In a very interesting game;
 "You're it," "you're it,"
There'll be some excitement, just the same.
And you go tip-toeing, peeking
Round the corners, softly sneaking,
For the game is hide-and-seeking—
Yes, and "you're it."

In other days grown older when you've come to man's estate,
You put these simple boyish sports behind you;
You have extreme ambitions and your ideas grow so great
It's difficult for friends or kin to find you.
And everything is rosy, there is romance in the land,
Each female form is clad in golden glory;
Till you meet the only female, and you take her by the hand,
And tell the old and interesting story,

 "You're it," "you're it,"
In a very interesting game;
 "You're it," "you're it,"
There'll be some excitement, just the same.
For the way the pink horizon
That you used to set your eyes on
Can vanish, will surprise one—
Yes, when "you're it."

You fix mature affection on a charming little dear,
Whose early years with sorrow have been blighted;
She's not a common person, that is very, very clear,
In thoughts and high ideals you're united.
She seems to be the presence you have needed all the while,
She lends to life what heretofore's been lacking;
She has her aspirations, she informs you with a smile,
And you gladly, very gladly, furnish backing.

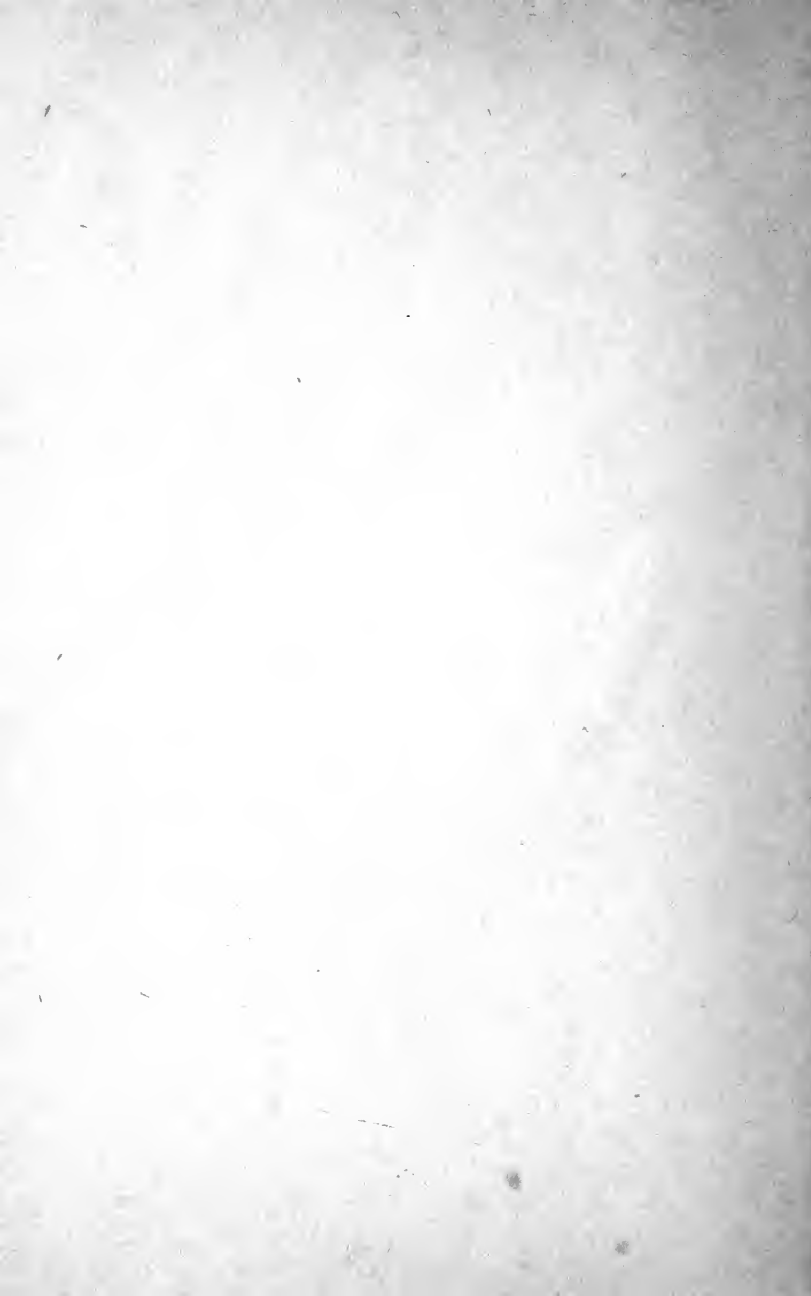
“You're it,” “you're it,”
In a very interesting game;
“You're it,” “you're it,”
There'll be some excitement, just the same.
With justice stern pursuing
They will read your billing, cooing,
And they'll know what you've been doing—
Yes, when “you're it.”



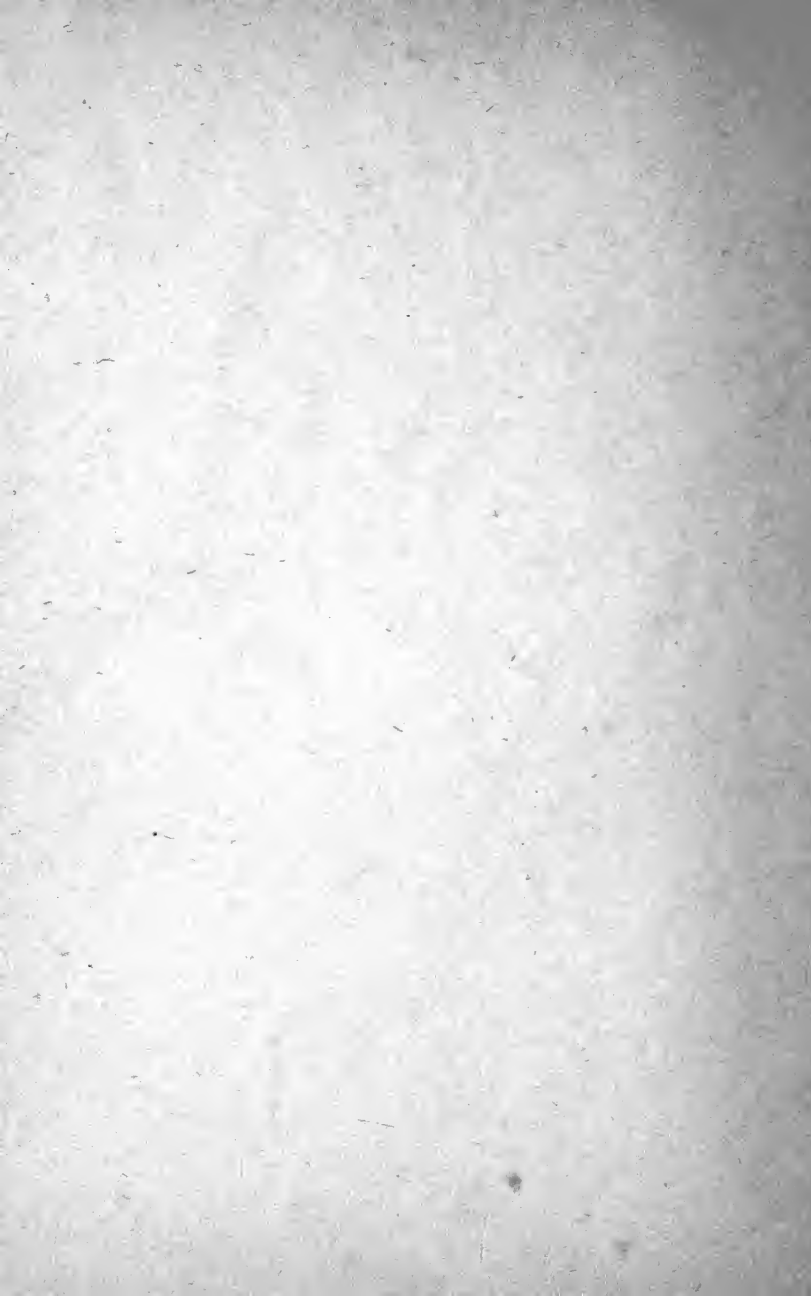
OH DAYS ON THE GOLDEN SANDS.

Oh days on the golden sands,
Oh nights by the shore,
Love told in the clasping hands,
Who'd hunger for more?
Oh days in the tropic shade,
Safe hid from the sun,
Happy the lover and island maid,
Their wooing begun.

Oh love in the golden isle,
Far hid in the sea,
Life passes in dreams the while
Suns smile upon thee.
Oh isle where the breezes blow
Soft welcome to bliss,
Happy the lover and maiden who know
Love's wakening kiss.









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